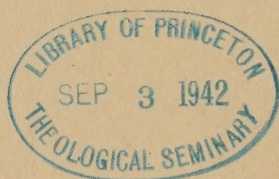

THE BACKGROUND OF THE REVOLUTION
FOR MEXICAN INDEPENDENCE

LILLIAN ESTELLE FISHER, Ph.D.



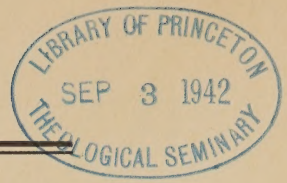
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THE BACKGROUND OF THE REVOLUTION
FOR MEXICAN INDEPENDENCE



O' DONOJU, THE LAST OF THE VICEROYS



The Background of the Revolution for Mexican Independence

BY

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DEDICATION
TO PROFESSOR HERBERT INGRAM PRIESTLEY,
A TRUE FRIEND OF THE MEXICAN PEOPLE.

PREFACE

The causes of the struggle for Mexican independence have always been of interest to students of American history. Broadly speaking, they go back to the time of the conquest by Cortés; but in the present work the aim is to give a reinterpretation of the more fundamental conditions which brought about the movement for separation which led to ultimate independence.

After years of frontier life in Mexico the various social classes developed differences of opinion regarding the functions of government and society, as a result of which new conceptions were in time developed. When the colonials became imbued with the ideals of the French Revolution they began to yearn for independence. More essentially and earlier, American frontier life had produced in them a psychological change of mental outlook, so that they realized that conditions in the dependency were unlike those in Spain and required different laws and policies. Such new ideas were inculcated by foreign writings, which were scattered throughout New Spain in spite of consistent government efforts to exclude them.

The colonials realized that the numerous commercial restrictions imposed upon them for many years had retarded their economic development. Spain could never provide its colonies with the manufactures and capital necessary for their advancement. After experiencing the benefits of a partially free commerce under the benevolent Charles III, and the cheapness of contraband articles imported under violation of the laws, the merchants of Mexico began to think of independence as a means of attaining greater commercial liberty. The general unprogressiveness of industry was another cause for dissatisfaction, and when the requested reforms did not materialize, the bold creoles con-

sidered separating from the mother country as a means to putting their industrial reforms into practice. For many years Mexico was deprived of the money necessary for promoting colonial economic projects, by reason of huge gifts and loans made to Spain. Growing weary of this, the colonists desired to administer their own financial affairs and to use their money for investment in America.

Nor were religious conditions more nearly ideal; inequalities among the various classes of ecclesiastics evoked a sentiment of injustice comparable to that existing between other social groups. The church grown rich aroused both the hostility and the cupidity of political administrators with shrinking resources. The exactions of the church from the people were high, and there was a growing dissatisfaction on that account. Liberal ideas, imbibed from foreign books, developed a popularity among the lower clergy which led many of them to espouse the separatist movement.

Abuses of political administration had been accumulating through the centuries, consequently many requests for reform were voiced. The widesweeping reforms of the vigorous Charles III came too late and were insufficient because they did not include any elements of self-government. Political conditions grew worse and worse up to the eve of the revolution, when a last attempt to secure efficiency was made by appointing military viceroys. But soldier-administrators could not save the day, since they had no liberal ideas with which to conciliate the independent spirit of the creoles. Foreign influence also urged on the desire for separation from Spain, since France, England, and the United States all sympathized with the Spanish-American longing. Then too, events in the mother country greatly affected the colony; the juntas of the peninsula were copied in America, and the Americans believed that it would be better to strike for separation than be subject to Napoleon.

With the advent of that imperialist revolt ensued ideas of independence since conditions in New Spain, especially those of the closing eighteenth and early nineteenth cen-

turies, drew gradually to their logical sequence in open revolt because the agencies of government were not improved sufficiently to meet the changes of the times. The story here told ends when Hidalgo and his brave followers appeared and the actual insurrection began.

The materials used in this book were obtained in the Archives of the Indies in Seville, the Bancroft Library at the University of California, and the García Library, University of Texas. In the footnotes and bibliography the initials AGI indicate provenance from the Archivo General de Indias; the abbreviation BL is used to indicate manuscripts in the Bancroft Library, and G for those in the García Library. Both the old and the new legajo numbers are given for the manuscripts from the Archive of the Indies, those in parenthesis being the old ones. Bancroft Library transcripts will be recognized by the single numbers. All books cited are in the Bancroft Library.

The Fellowship granted me by the Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs, given to an international member of the Association of University Women, made this work possible. Grateful acknowledgements are due to the Spanish Association of University Women for selecting me as their candidate for the Fellowship and for their kindness to me while in Spain. Thanks are due to the chiefs of the Archive of the Indies of Seville for their aid and courtesy to me while working in the archives, and to the staff of the García Library for similar courtesies. I am deeply indebted to Professor Herbert Ingram Priestley, who has read and criticized this work.

LILLIAN ESTELLE FISHER.

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The Background of the Revolution for Mexican Independence

I

SOCIAL CONDITIONS

Social life in the Spanish American colonies was always based upon the principle of inequality. Class distinctions were fostered from the beginning, and an effort was made to force life to conform to the European type which had grown up in Spain after a long period of social discrimination. Any democratic influence or non-European social forms which might arise from frontier conditions in a new country were frowned upon and counteracted by the home government. Social gradations passed through many stages, from the humble Indian or untamed savage to the titled nobleman or haughty grandee. By persistently maintaining the lines between privilege and non-privilege, between the recipients of political favors and those who were excluded from such favors, Spain helped to prepare for a social revolution in America.

Spanish colonial policy provided for the absorption of a dependent race, the Indians, who were adopted as an element in society, although the king did not recognize their equal status with the whites. What a contrast to the English procedure, which left no place for the American native in the social organization! "Spain treated the people well, compared with other nations," said Abad Queipo, bishop of Michoacán, "adding all the conquests to the crown of Castile, making them integral parts of the monarchy, giving all the conquered natives the rights which the conquerors enjoyed, and including all in the same monarchy, a

single nation and family."¹ "There has never been another example in history of a nation establishing an equality of rights among conquered and conquerors such as Spain established in America." The noble bishop believed that no other nation did so much for any of its dependencies. He said, "Although Spain was in decay for three centuries because of the ambition and apathy of the kings and the despotism of ministers, it made the American possessions flourish until they were the envy of Europeans."² King Ferdinand VII saw no reason for the American colonists to be dissatisfied. He declared that they paid no more taxes than the metropolis, the natives were exempted from the *alcabala*, or sales tax, and they enjoyed freedom and protection since the days of the conquest, the *encomiendas* and *repartimientos* had been abolished when abuses arose, creoles were made equal to Europeans before the law, contracts could be made easily, everybody was free to cut wood and plant trees, the inhabitants were governed with leniency, equality, and justice, the capital of Mexico was beautified with magnificent temples and public buildings, and wealth belonged to all men if they had talent to win it, not to Europeans alone.³

The race admixture which resulted from the Spanish policy produced many puzzling and far-reaching effects. Unmarried Spanish women were forbidden to emigrate to the New World; but since a large number of single men went to the colonies, unions between Spaniards and Indian women were permitted to hasten the spread of European civilization.⁴ Hence, in the course of time, numerous new racial groups sprang up which were often unruly and hard to discipline, thereby making the task of administration heavy.

¹"A todos los habitantes de Michoacán. Feb. 15, 1811. In *Colección de varios escritos de Abad Queipo*, num. 2, pp. 7-8. G.

²"A sus diocesanos." Valladolid, 1811. In *Papeles varios*, 62, num. 17, pp. 5-12.

³Fernando VII, "Manifiesto á todos las naciones por el superior gobierno de Nueva España." Mexico, 1820, *ibid.*, 36, num. 68, pp. 22-24.

⁴*Recopilación de leyes de los reynos de las Indias* (Ed. 4, Madrid, 1791), ley 2, tit. 1, lib. 6.

The European Spaniards, also called *gachupines*, were the most favored people in the dependencies.⁵ Ever since the time of the conquest they had constituted a kind of upper aristocracy because they had been born in Europe, and naturally they ruled over the helpless native population as they pleased. There were always some nobles among them who were usually very loyal and subservient to the monarch; likewise many were of lowly origin without education or cultural background. Indeed, some of them were reckless adventurers who had been incorrigible at home and who came to America to sow their wild oats. Others were deserters from ships, license-evaders, and refugees from justice.⁶ Many were merchants who obtained great riches and married into noble families; their chief ambition was to obtain the title of count or marquis and a cross of Santiago or Calatrava and later of the Order of Charles III, since those titles gave them special privileges.⁷ Others were owners of large estates, miners, judges of the *audiencias* and lower courts, and ecclesiastics. No matter what was their standing or how poor they were, New Spain existed for them. The remembrance of their former miserable condition in the home country caused much sport among their enemies.⁸

It was to the advantage of a large number of the haughty *gachupines* to cling to their position of superiority; therefore they emphasized their exclusiveness and many became snobs. The most wretched European without education or culture believed himself to be better than the whites born in Mexico.⁹ Fearing uprisings and revolts, they continually took repressive measures against the lower classes; however, this policy soon developed toward the European-born

⁵The term *gachupín* was derived from an Indian word meaning a spur. Herbert I. Priestley, *The Mexican Nation, a History* (New York, 1924), 116.

⁶Hipólito Villarreal, *Enfermedades políticas que padece la capital de esta Nueva España*. . . MS, III, pt. V, pp. 149-150. BL.

⁷Lucas Alamán, *Historia de Méjico* (Méjico, 1849-1852), I, 16-17.

⁸Jorge Juan y Antonio de Ulloa, *Noticias secretas de America* (Madrid, 1826), 417 et seq.

⁹Baron Alexander von Humboldt, *Ensayo político sobre Nueva España* (Paris, 1836), I, 226.

an undying hostility which even the wars of independence did not entirely quench.

On the eve of independence, according to Humboldt, the noted traveler, there were not more than seventy or eighty thousand European-born Spaniards who lived in New Spain. Consequently they composed only the seventieth part of the total population, yet they occupied almost all the principal offices in the administration, church, and army.¹⁰ They almost controlled commerce exclusively and were owners of much capital employed in different businesses and in all kinds of estates. The second Viceroy Revillagigedo (1789-1794) said that almost all the miners, *hacendados* or farmers, employers, and merchants were Europeans or their descendants, that all maintained a strict dependence on their houses in Spain, and that most of them were influenced by only one purpose—to acquire wealth with which to retire to their native country.¹¹ Many from poor but honest families came to the New World when quite young to seek their fortune and to engage in any profitable venture. Some, considering work and economy the only road to wealth, served in the family of relatives or friends until they obtained a start in life. When they advanced economically and their merits increased, they married the daughters of the families in which they worked. Some of those young men never thought of returning home, because their first interests were in America, and many became excellent citizens.¹²

The gachupines even discriminated between their own full-blooded white sons; those born in the colonies were

¹⁰*Ensayo político sobre Nueva España*, I, 230. In 1799 Abad Queipo said that the Spaniards made up one-tenth of the total population of Mexico, and in 1810 he inferred that they formed one-fifth of it. But, no doubt, he included in this estimate some Spaniards born in America. José María Luis Mora, *Obras sueltas* (Paris, 1837), I, 54, 148. Navarro y Noriega contradicted this statement and related that there were 1,000,000 whites in New Spain at the beginning of the nineteenth century, among them about 20,000 Spaniards born in Europe. Vicente Riva Palacio, *México á través de los siglos* (Barcelona, 1888-1889), III, 19.

¹¹Viceroy to Valdés. Mexico, Jan. 14, 1790, num. 111 reservada. Archivo General de Mexico. BL.

¹²Alamán, I, 8-9.

called creoles and were considered inferior to those who claimed Spain as their birthplace. It was repeatedly alleged that the environment and climatic conditions in America bred in their sons fickleness, extravagance, and an unstable character which incapacitated them for efficient public service. Again, it was asserted that creoles were not as good business men as their fathers, and rarely followed the professions which had enriched them. When they obtained possession of their inheritances they soon became financially ruined; but they were just as patient in adverse fortune as they had been extravagant in good fortune. They lacked discipline and were indolent, no doubt because their parents had neglected their training. Many were given a literary education only; thus they assumed the airs of vain, polished gentlemen and pretended that manual labor would degrade them.¹³ Some, it is true, regarded any activity beneath them. They rose late and did nothing in the morning. At noon they appeared in military uniform, which they were permitted to wear because of a purchased commission. Civilian clothes were donned in the afternoon to attend the bullfight. The evening and the greater part of the night they spent in pleasures and gaieties of all kinds.¹⁴ The legal profession was one of the few vocations without a stigma, hence the young creoles flocked into it and some of them became able lawyers.¹⁵ They served satisfactorily in the audiencia of Mexico during the Gálvez visitation.¹⁶ Yet the government mistrusted the creoles and usually excluded them from high offices. A perpetual jealousy and hatred therefore arose between them and the Europeans.

Naturally the creoles were ambitious and wanted what they could not have—the important positions in the country, as well as the inferior ones. In 1792 the archbishop, Alonso Núñez de Haro, at the request of the municipal council of

¹³Alamán, I, 10-12.

¹⁴Emilio del Castillo Negrete, *México en el siglo XIX* (Mexico, 1875-1891), I, 336-337.

¹⁵Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, *De la colonisation chez les peuples modernes* (Ed 4, Paris, 1891), 9.

¹⁶Herbert I. Priestley, *José de Gálvez* (Berkeley, 1916), 52.

Mexico City, which was composed of Spaniards, provided that only minor ecclesiastical offices should be granted to creoles.¹⁷ In order to avoid quarrels and disturbances between American-born members of the clergy and those who came from Spain, the plan of alternation was adopted—the appointment for two or four years of creole prelates only in the religious orders and then for an equal period the selection of gachupines only for the same offices. Even this project did not work very well; for whenever the European faction foresaw that it was about to be defeated by its rival, it sent to Europe for recruits to give majorities in voting for commissaryships.¹⁸ Villarroel, an attorney of Mexico, said, “Without a doubt, many of those who leave Europe full of fervor and the desire of conquering souls for Heaven, in a short time become disillusioned and know that their coming has been for no other purpose than that of augmenting the party, in order to divide the prelacies, the priories, the guardianships, and other offices.”¹⁹ The Order of the Barefoot Carmelites positively refused to take creole members, while the Augustinians admitted them and excluded all Europeans.²⁰ Alamán, the Mexican historian, declared later that European ecclesiastics were favored and that there were two elections of them to one of the creoles. In 1808 all of the bishoprics and most of the other positions of the church were filled by gachupines. Alamán also stated that there were a few exceptions among the American-born Spaniards, since some of them were industrious and distinguished in the church for their integrity and wisdom; likewise some of the Europeans, especially from the middle provinces of Spain, were vicious, and at times committed atrocious crimes.²¹

Without doubt, the creoles were as intelligent, capable,

¹⁷ Alamán, I, 13.

¹⁸ *Instrucciones que los virreyes de Nueva España dejaron a sus sucesores* (Mexico, 1867), art. 20, p. 66; *Memorias de los virreyes que han gobernado el Peru* (Lima, 1859), I, 271-275.

¹⁹ *Enfermedades políticas*. . . MS, I, pt. I, p. 32. BL.

²⁰ *Instrucciones que los virreyes de Nueva España dejaron a sus sucesores*, 272-274.

²¹ *Historia de Méjico*, I, 13-15.

and energetic as their more favored fathers; but only limited opportunities were open to their social aspirations. They knew the conditions and needs of the colonies, and were conscious of their own innate ability to take part in the government. They did become possessors of minor political offices; frequently and from a very early date their fathers purchased for them the position of town councilmen, which became hereditary. Even in regard to filling those offices a conservative voice was heard, which declared that in the secular and ecclesiastical *cabildos* at least half of the individuals who composed them should be Europeans.²² Their few positions, however, did not satisfy the creoles, for their municipal powers were subject to the control of the centralized administration of the viceroy.²³ They felt that they were victims of an unjust discrimination; therefore they and their friends drew together more and more into a powerful opposition. They wished to rule alone and be exclusive proprietors, hence envy, dissension, and division resulted.²⁴ No bitterness endures like that of the provincial despised because of his provincialism.

By 1789 the rivalry between American and European-born Spaniards had become so intense that the former preferred to be called Americans. Frequently the young creole asserted with pride, "I am not a Spaniard; I am an American," and he became overbearing in his attitude towards Europeans who arrived impoverished from Spain. Before the law, every white creole was a Spaniard, but the laws were abused and thus the bonds were loosened which should have bound a large number of colonists to the mother country.²⁵ Why did the government not see the evil consequences, try to re-establish harmony, and calm the passions and resentments between the Europeans and creoles? The self-assertion of the suppressed party was delayed by the

²²Parecer sobre el gobierno y comercio de las Indias. AGI, 141-6-4 (sin fecha sin firma). BL.

²³Priestley, *The Mexican Nation*, 117.

²⁴Mora, I, 148.

²⁵Humboldt, I, 226.

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isolation of the colonies, lack of communication, and the absence of free intellectual activity. The jealousy and suspicion toward the proud gachupines nevertheless continued. They were regarded as usurpers because of their power and wealth; often they were more favored for this reason by the fair sex than were the creoles. Most of the white women of New Spain had been born in America, but they were declared to be free from the defects of their brothers. They were considered exceptions to the general rules and were noted for their gentleness.²⁶

As early as 1771, the *cabildo* or municipal council of Mexico City sent a petition to the liberal-minded Charles III, asking that the creoles should be preferred in political positions to the Europeans. That the Spanish-Americans desired the good of the country and of the beloved monarch as much as anybody, that those who resided in the capital had always been very loyal, that people born in America could serve it best because they loved it best, yet had rarely been granted favors in secular or ecclesiastical matters, that the European was more interested to enrich himself and return home, thereby lacking the spirit of devotion to the province—these were some of the reasons given for the request. On the other hand, the Spaniards who came to America suffered from grave handicaps; it was necessary for Europeans to risk the dangerous sea and sometimes their lives and bear the cost of transportation to come to the colony; also they must bring with them their families and servants. It had cost the last two archbishops of Mexico 45,000 pesos to reach their destination in America. Frequently officials got into debt before their arrival in New Spain, and could not be very scrupulous in their positions when they were molested by creditors and when they knew that the country abounded in gold and silver. Judges sold justice for their own utility and many returned to the mother country rich. Gachupín priests had been placed in

²⁶Alamán, I, 14-15.

the parishes, although they did not understand the people and often were ignorant of their language; when bishops came with relatives they worked for family interests and soon mistaken ideas arose about European prelates.

The Spaniard seldom made a study of the country or of the people whom he had come to govern. Neither he nor his family knew the customs of the inhabitants, for they were imbued with Old World ideas unsuited to America. Yet the recently-arrived European tried to establish his maxims and ideas, losing much valuable time until his eyes were opened to his mistakes. What could be hoped for from his administration? After two centuries the misery of the Indians was worse than ever and their number had greatly decreased in spite of good laws. It was asserted by the petitioners that Spain was being depopulated by the employment of Spaniards in office in the New World, since as many as 10,000 arrived annually and the number continued to increase. Under such conditions Spain would soon be a weak nation when the best and most energetic inhabitants emigrated—a prophecy which came true later. This enervation of the home land was also predicted by the keen Abad Queipo, who declared that Spain had been deprived of 5,000,000 Spaniards by emigration to America and the adjacent islands, a truly great and irreparable loss, one of the chief causes of the decadence of Spain.

The petition went on to say that the exclusion of the better-informed creoles from the most honorable positions, although they were related to some of the best families of Spain, forced them to lead obscure lives, which was unjust to them and would cause the ruin of the state. It averred that in the Spanish-Americans there was the same nobility of spirit and the same loyalty as in the most noble Europeans, and those who had a chance to hold office were very faithful. It was admitted that the common people sometimes caused disturbances, but the harsh conduct of the

European viceroy and archbishop was often the occasion for turmoil, such as had occurred in 1624.²⁷

Manuel de Vidaurre, an American representative to the Spanish Cortes, believed that Americans should hold as high offices as Europeans if they were capable, as this would create a better social understanding. He advised that American children should be educated in Spanish colleges, for any man loves those with whom he has been a school-mate. These children were to be transported to Spain free of charge and should be allowed to marry Europeans to help the reconciliation between the two classes.²⁸ In his representation to the king in 1815 Abad Queipo offered as one of the remedies for the rebellion in New Spain the suggestion that Americans should be placed in high military, ecclesiastical and political positions in Spain, except in those of chief ministers, though he specified that never should more than one-third of the Council of the Indies be composed of them. He also thought that Americans from Mexico should be allowed to hold high offices in Peru and vice versa.²⁹

On the other side of the social abyss, the gachupines had plenty of champions and defenders. In 1810 the archbishop viceroy, Lizana y Beaumont, declared that the Europeans and creoles were like two brothers, or perhaps more like an uncle and a nephew, and as such had lived peacefully for

²⁷"Representación que hizo la ciudad de México al rey D. Carlos III en 1771 sobre que los criollos deben ser preferidos á los Europeos en la distribución de empleos y beneficios de estos reinos." In Juan Hernández y Dávalos, *Colección de documentos para la historia de la guerra de independencia de Mexico de 1808 a 1821* (Mexico, 1877-1882), I, 427-452; "A todos los habitantes de Michoacán." Feb. 15, 1811. In *Colección de varios escritos del Abad Queipo*, num. 2, p. 11. G.

²⁸"Votos de los Americanos á la nación española, y á nuestro amado monarca el Señor Don Fernando VII; verdadero concordato entre Españoles, Europeos y Americanos, refutando las máximas del obispo presentado Don Manuel de Abad y Queipo en su carta de veinte de junio de mil ochocientos quince." In *Representación de la diputación Americana a las Cortes* (Mexico, 1820), num. 9, pp. 25-26. G.

²⁹Representación a S. M. en 20 de Junio de 1815 por el obispo electo de Michoacán el Ilmo. Sr. D. Manuel Abad y Queipo sobre la situación política de nuestras Americas. MS, p. 32. Photostat copy taken from the original in the Cuevas Collection. G.

three centuries, inhabiting the rich country of Mexico. He protested that the European Spaniard really loved his American wife and children, and that the creole protected the European who had recently come to America, intrusted his estate to him, and allowed him to unite with his family in marriage; therefore a rivalry between relatives, between father and son, husband and wife, and between brothers would be impossible.⁸⁰ Juan Calvillo asserted that it was unjust to believe the frequent allegation that Europeans were owners of all the wealth of America, that they sent to Spain all the money acquired in Mexico, not letting it circulate for the benefit of the Americans, or that they enjoyed all the appreciation and esteem.⁸¹

"We appreciate our European parents [says Manuel de Viduarre]. They have been owners of our treasure and of our daughters. We have received them in our homes without any other examination than that of their honor and virtues. We have preferred them in matrimony to the natives. They are excellent fathers of families, devoted to work, . . . they increase the wealth which they receive. Their perfections please me, their defects are only disclosed through their arrogance and the strong laws of necessity."⁸²

The spirited Queipo likewise upheld the gachupines, whom he thought had the greatest interest in the observance of the laws which protected their life and honor, their estates and wealth, against the insults and envy of the lower classes.⁸³ True it was that they grew rich in America through their talents and virtues, but they broke family

⁸⁰"Virey a los habitantes de la Nueva España," Mexico, 1810. In *Papeles varios*, 62, num. 3, pp. 9-10.

⁸¹Juan Bautista Díaz Calvillo, "Discurso sobre los malos que puede causar la desunión entre Españoles ultramarinos y Americanos." Mexico, 1810, *ibid.*, 65, num. 2, pp. 9-13.

⁸²"Votos de los Americanos á la nacion española, y a nuestro amado monarca el Señor Don Fernando VII. . ." In *Representación de la diputación Americana a las Cortes*, num. 9, pp. 1-2. G.

⁸³"Representación sobre la inmunidad personal del clero. . ." In *Mora*, I, 58.

ties to come to the New World and exposed themselves to dangers and hard work. They were interested solely in preparing for the happiness and abundance of their wives and children, whom they loved tenderly. This was the principal purpose of the Europeans in Mexico and to it they destined all their wealth; but this wealth belonged to all New Spain, since they sent only one one-hundredth part of it to Spain to aid relatives there.³⁴ The bishop maintained that the general happiness and wealth of the nation depended on the riches, talents, and energy of the Spaniards, their prudence in conducting affairs, and their ability to acquire large capital and to work; he claimed that they censored customs, and set an example of application, industry, order, and good government; also that they formed the most useful part of society. He asserted that in the United States everybody knew that a person who accumulated capital did not injure others, but that the wealth and prosperity of a country was in proportion to the capital put into it.³⁵ The worthy prelate always supported the nobles and clergy as the bulwark of the monarchy, and he believed that they assured for the king the subordination and obedience of the lower classes of people by serving as mediators among the latter. They deserved all the exemptions, authority, powers, and privileges which were granted them. In times past they sometimes did abuse their privileges, but Abad Queipo felt that there was no longer any abuse or harm.³⁶ Manuel de Toral was of the opinion that as many creoles were employed in offices in New Spain as Europeans; the latter however had more ability to acquire wealth than the Americans who had the same advantages.³⁷

The fair minded Queipo tried to show an impartial attitude toward all classes of society, although he championed

³⁴"Carta pastoral" Valladolid, Sept. 26, 1812. In *Colección de varios escritos del Abad Queipo*, num. 3, pp. 50-52. G.

³⁵"Edicto instructivo dirige a sus diocesanos." Valladolid, 1810. In *Papeles varios*, 62, num. 16, pp. 12-13.

³⁶"Representación sobre la inmunidad personal del clero. . ." In Mora, I, 12-13.

³⁷"Deseñano de falsas imposturas." Mexico, 1811. In *Papeles varios*, 65, num. 9, pp. 16-17.

the gachupines when he felt that they merited it. He asserted that neither the son nor the father had more rights in a country than those which the laws of society determined, and Spanish laws did not give advantage to either of the two. The ecclesiastic added:

“He who is born by chance in a foreign country or province different from that of the origin and home of his parents . . . is not a native of that country in the first case, nor does he acquire municipal rights in the second, because laws of cultured countries and especially of ours do not attribute or allow them on account of quality or birth. Consequently the European Spanish enjoy and should enjoy in the Americas the same rights which the natives enjoy, whether they be Spaniards or Indians, as the latter enjoy in the peninsula. All are members of the same society, under the same laws which we have sworn to and observed for three centuries, and which no one can violate without committing treason.”

The bishop maintained that the natives of both Americas had been admitted without any distinction to all the dignities of the secular and the ecclesiastical monarchy. With respect to the number of Spanish-Americans and European-Spaniards the first had more part in them than the second because there were always many Americans in the army and navy, and not a few had been employed in the peninsula, in the *consejos* or councils, in the audiencias, in the treasury, and in justice. He said that in America they occupied half of the judgeships, prebends, the greater part of the *alcaldías mayores* (districts administered by *alcades mayores*), and municipal offices, almost all the curacies and the greater part of the regular prelacies. Queipo declared that the discontent between the two groups might have been averted if the mother country had looked out more for its own preservation. He believed that if at the beginning a law had been passed whereby at ten years of age the sons of Europeans had been sent to Spain, where they might

enjoy all privileges, and if creoles had married with gachupines and vice versa, the social bonds of the colonies and the peninsula would have been tightened and a more united and stronger body would have resulted. Then the hated distinction between gachupines and creoles would have been unknown—the childish rivalry which caused so many evils.³⁸

The gachupines in Mexico were accused of corresponding with the wily Napoleon Bonaparte in order to surrender the country to the French; accordingly Fermin de Reyadas showed that this was false, that they had generously aided the mother country, and that they caused sciences, arts, and industry to flourish.³⁹ Josef María Zelaa e Hidalgo described the gachupines as honorable men, Catholic Christians, faithful vassals of the king, lovers of peace and of the colony, who never thought of giving Mexico to the French, but who sacrificed their persons and possessions to preserve the legitimate sovereign. They favored the creoles as their brothers, rather than oppressed them, recognized America as their home, and never thought of doing it the least evil.⁴⁰ Another inhabitant of New Spain wrote to a friend in Cádiz about the gachupines. In the letter he declared that, although there were some Europeans of bad conduct, most of them were good and industrious men; also the supposition that the Europeans were rich and the Americans poor was false. The former worked hard and with privation and anxieties won wealth which they left to their children who often spent it lavishly. He tried to prove that the gachupines did not form a different cast, but that they were citizens endowed with morality, civic and religious virtues; yet the Americans, not following their example and acquiring wealth by industry, hated and envied them.⁴¹

³⁸"A todos los habitantes de Michoacán." Feb. 15, 1811. In *Colección de varios escritos del Abad Queipo*, num. 2, pp. 9-12. G.

³⁹"Discurso contra el fanatismo y la impostura de los rebeldes de Nueva España." In *Papeles varios*, 18, num. 34, pp. 24, 27.

⁴⁰"Querétaro agradecida por haberla librado Dios de los daños de la presente revolución." Mexico, 1811, *ibid.*, 12, num. 1, pp. 7-8.

⁴¹"Carta escrita por un vecino de Mexico a un amigo de Cádiz. . ." Mexico, Dec. 15, 1820. In *Papeles varios*, 36, num. 68, pp. 108-111.

After 1810, during the revolution of the priest Hidalgo, the creoles were at last able to take awful vengeance upon the despised Europeans. The shout of "Death to the gachupines" was often heard. Those unfortunate people were driven out of their homes and robbed; some were also assassinated and their wives and children injured.⁴² Their capital disappeared in a moment, all their possessions were taken from them, and they became poor.⁴³ Abad Queipo said that they saw with sadness and compassion the sacking of their possessions, and the rancorous ferocity of the people who destroyed without provocation that which they could not carry off—precious furniture, balconies, doors, and windows of buildings.⁴⁴ In the town of Dolores the Europeans were imprisoned, and the shops of some were closed or put in charge of creoles. The immortal Hidalgo believed that the American should be governed by the American as the German was governed by the German. It is certain that the common people and army composed mostly of Indians sacked many of the possessions of the gachupines, a portion of the proceeds being reserved to maintain the troops; but Hidalgo declared that he had no part in the assassination of Europeans.⁴⁵ Manuel de Toral estimated that more than three hundred European-Spaniards were killed in cold blood by the revolutionists in Guanajuato, more than one hundred in Valladolid, and some six hundred in Guadalajara. He said that from the beginning of the struggle the gachupines on the other hand showed justice and humanity.⁴⁶ Bishop Queipo gives the smaller number of seven hundred as the total of the European prisoners executed in the revolutionary centers men-

⁴²Josef María Zelaa y Hidalgo, "Querétaro agradecida por haberla librado Dios de los daños de la presente revolución." Mexico, 1811. In *Papeles varios*, 12, num. 1, pp. 10-12.

⁴³Abad Queipo, "Edicto instructivo dirige a sus diocesanos," *ibid.*, 62, num. 16, p. 16.

⁴⁴"A todos los habitantes de Michoacán." Feb. 15, 1811. In *Colección de varios escritos del Abad Queipo*, num. 2, pp. 16-17. G.

⁴⁵"Declaración del cura Hidalgo." In Hernández y Dávalos, I, 9-16.

⁴⁶"Deseñano de falsas imposturas." Mexico, 1811. In *Papeles varios (Variedades políticas)*, 65, num. 9, pp. 21-28.

tioned; among them were many innocent and virtuous men noted for justice and charity, who risked and lost their lives and fortunes in trying to check evils and aid their fellow citizens, thus by their heroic efforts rendering to God and country the most important services. Some were ecclesiastics who risked all and made the supreme sacrifice.⁴⁷ According to the figures of Queipo, the total number of gachupines put to death in all parts of New Spain exceeded two thousand.⁴⁸

Even in 1826 curses were still being hurled against the Spaniards who lived in Mexico, and the iniquities of the conquerors were still attributed to them. Many writers cried "Cursed be the gachupines . . . who live on the soil and cause so many evils." The misunderstood Europeans defended themselves by saying that they had the same religion and language, observed the same laws, obeyed and respected the same government, desired peace and liberty as much as the Americans, that they had married in the country, and were fathers of Mexicans who some day would serve the state; hence they had a right to live in America.⁴⁹

The despised *mestizo*, or half-breed group with Spanish and Indian blood, constituted a still more difficult problem for Spanish administrators. The mestizo population increased very rapidly from the beginning and inherited the qualities and were considered to be subject to the vices of both parents. Many grew up as foundlings and were cared for in charitable institutions. This class was neglected and discriminated against even more than the creoles. Certain laws of the Indies specifically excluded them from some kinds of public offices, such as those of treasurers and protectors of the Indians, but opened positions in the church

⁴⁷"A todos los habitantes de Michoacán." Feb. 15, 1811. In *Colección de varios escritos del Abad Queipo*, num. 2, p. 17. G.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, appendix, 73. Later in 1815 Queipo mentions two thousand as the number of Europeans killed in Guanajuato, Valladolid, and Guadalajara. "Representación a S. M. en 20 de junio de 1815 por el obispo electo de Michoacán el Ilmo. Sr. D. Manuel Abad y Queipo sobre la situación política de nuestras Americas, MS, p. 18. G.

⁴⁹"Trueno de los gachupines en Méjico." Mexico, 1826. In *Papeles varios*, 69, num. 28, pp. 1-3.

to them if they were of legitimate birth.⁶⁰ In spite of the laws which permitted them to enter the sacred profession, custom prevented them from holding office either in the church or state. They were not allowed to carry arms, and the women were not to use gold, silk, or pearls.⁶¹ It was thought that the mestizos who lived among the Indians caused disturbances and aided them in their litigations against the Spaniards; accordingly many viceregal measures aimed to prevent the unruly half-breeds from residing in native towns.⁶²

Nowhere in the world have the unfortunate half-breeds ever had opportunity equal to that of the pure-blooded; thus their lot in Mexico was not exceptional, even when they formed the most useful part of the population. Since they were among the earth's dispossessed, the mestizos were employed in menial occupations in the households and convents, in minor trades, and in the mines. They exercised the mechanical arts in the towns and cities, managed horses, performed very helpful work in agriculture and in commercial transactions, and, notwithstanding the laws to the contrary, served in the militia after the middle of the eighteenth century, performing their duties along the disease-infected coasts where Europeans perished. Although the mestizos were ignorant and usually lacked the rudiments of education, they could learn easily. They were endowed with the greatest energy and the most vehement passions.⁶³

In the passing of the centuries the admixture of races continued; hence Spain had to deal with a heterogeneous people. The various racial combinations were known as castes which were almost too numerous to count. On the eve of independence in Mexico about 2,400,000 individuals belonged to the castes, seven-eighths of which were mestizos.

⁶⁰*Recopilación*, ley 1, tit. 27, lib. 2; ley 7, tit. 6, lib. 6; ley 7, tit. 7, lib. 1.

⁶¹Alamán, I, 25.

⁶²*Instrucciones que los vireyes de Nueva España dejaron a sus sucesores*, art. 3, p. 224; *Documentos inéditos . . . de Indias* (Madrid, 1864-1884), VI, 224-225.

⁶³Alamán, I, 25-26; Riva Palacio, III, 18.

A mestizo child having a Spanish father and an Indian mother was sometimes perfectly white, and when a mestizo married a white man, the child of the second generation could scarcely be distinguished from a European. The vain Spaniards were always very careful to differentiate blood mixture and to name the most delicate varieties of colors. Persons with a slight strain of white blood were honored by the term "*gente de razon*" or people possessed of reasoning power; thus this element took pride in its white blood and thought itself superior to the people of darker complexion. When gentlemen quarreled it was commonly asked, "Do you believe yourself whiter than me?" Persons with dark skins could be declared white by a court decision; in this way sometimes mulattoes were pronounced white. When there was doubt about the color, the audiencia might state that "they were considered as white". Judge Ignacio Altamirano, a Mexican literary critic of pure Indian blood, tells the amusing story how he became a white man. This occurred when his father happened to be appointed *alcalde* of the village; then the schoolmaster decided to teach the boy Ignacio his letters and he was classified among the "gente de razon".

It exhausted the vocabulary of the Spaniards to find names for all the castes; for example, the child of a mestizo and a Spanish woman was called a *castizo*; the offspring of a mulatto and a Spanish woman was known as a *morisco*; and mulattoes were descendants of whites and negroes. When Indians and negroes intermarried their children were said to be *zambos* or *chinos*; the *zambos prietos* resulted from the union of a negro man and a zambo woman. *Cuarterones* were the descendants of a white man and a mulatto woman, and when a *cuarterona* married a European or creole man her child had the name of *quinteron*. There were individuals designated by the expression *salta atrás* or throw back, persons born in a white family but having dark complexions which showed that somewhere in their ancestry

there was a strain of negro blood.⁵⁴ There were other racial admixtures known as *lobos* (wolves) and coyotes. Finally the Spaniards gave up the classification of all the castes and merely designated the lower group of society as "*los pardos y demas castas*"—the dark ones and the other castes.⁵⁵

The mestizos were naturally much closer to the unprivileged Indians than to the Spaniards, and with the exception of those few whose mothers belonged to noble families had no social standing whatever. They could not progress without education, lands, or positions of responsibility. As descendants of the Spaniards they should have had equal rights, but they were confused in the general class of castes. At the dawn of independence they were suspected by the Indians of being allies of the white oppressors, while both Spaniards and creoles feared and mistrusted them as possible leaders of the Indians against white supremacy. The mestizo class could not express itself before the coming of independence and then for many years it was dominated by the creoles. At last in the Wars of Reform in the middle of the nineteenth century the half-breeds came to the front and have taken increasing part in all the revolutions since that time; therefore they are a force to be reckoned with in recent Mexican affairs.

The indigent castes lived on a very low level of civilization and were seen at their worst in the larger cities, where they became inured to many vices. The ease with which food might be obtained from charitable organizations encouraged them to beg and to undertake petty thefts. The castes were noted for their drunkenness, gambling, and lewdness.⁵⁶ They were poor and ignorant, with rivalry

⁵⁴Humboldt, I, 259-263. Zambos had three-fourths negro and one-fourth white blood; zambos prietos seven-eighths negro blood and one-eighth white; cuarterones one-fourth negro and three-fourths white blood; and quin-terones had one-eighth negro and seven-eighths white blood. George B. Winton, *Mexico Past and Present* (Nashville, 1928), 63.

⁵⁵Priestley, *The Mexican Nation*, 125.

⁵⁶*Instrucciones que los wireyes de Nueva España dejaron a sus sucesores*, 307; Charles François Croix, Marqués de Croix, Instrucción que dejó . . . a su sucesor Don Antonio Bucarely y Ursua. Mexico, Sept. 1, 1771, AGI, 88-5-13. BL.

among themselves; especially did they dislike the Spanish class because of what the latter possessed.⁵⁷ In 1805 Juan Cruz, the bishop of Guadalajara, reported that the lower class of people did not have the means to subsist on account of lack of industry or property to cultivate, and because they never had a regular education nor sentiments to inspire them and help them to live. Many could not obtain any kind of daily labor, hence it was necessary for them to beg or wander among the royal mines and larger cities, where they were subject to pernicious influences. They went about nude without shame, committed acts of rapine, homicide, and robbery, frequently they broke the ties of matrimony, deserted their families, and became useless vagabonds who caused many public disorders.⁵⁸ The castes descendant from negro slaves were endowed with an energetic and ardent character which caused them to live in a state of constant irritation against the whites. They were subject to the tribute which was like an indelible mark of slavery transmissible to the most remote generations; therefore Humboldt believed that the hated personal tribute should be abolished and that the castes should be declared capable of occupying all civil offices.⁵⁹

The far-seeing Abad Queipo had the same view about tribute. He declared that every tributary who was not an Indian was publicly reputed to be a mulatto, a descendant of an African slave; accordingly tribute among the castes was a brand of servitude which excluded them from all civil offices and even from entering a religious brotherhood. It was a tax that connoted addiction to all the vices, was costly to the contributors, who were not able to pay it because of their ignorance and poverty, and it only produced one million pesos for the treasury of New Spain. It caused

⁵⁷Abad Queipo, "Edicto instructivo dirige a sus diocesanos." Valladolid, 1810. In *Papeles varios*, 62, num. 16, p. 18.

⁵⁸Bishop of Guadalajara to the king. Guadalajara, Jan. 17, 1805, AGI, 104-7-17 (Audiencia de Guadalajara), p. 16. BL.

⁵⁹*Ensayo político sobre Nueva España*, I, 209.

especial vexations, since tribute payers could not go to another jurisdiction without taking with them a certificate of their payment of tribute or be subject to it again as vagabonds, and it made the exempt Spanish families haughty. For these reasons and on account of it being easier to replenish the treasury by other less injurious and more profitable means, the good bishop had, ever since 1791, petitioned the administration to abolish tribute, but his entreaties had not been heeded.⁶⁰

The intendant of Yucatan called attention to the confusion in the payment of tribute on account of the difficulty of deciding who was in the tributary class, because there was a frequent mixture of Spaniards, Indians, and mulattoes in his province. He believed that negroes, those who were known to be mulattoes, and the castes having much negro blood could reasonably be declared subject to tribute, but that all others who were doubtful should be exempted from it. The tribunal of accounts considered the intendant's report and agreed that all foundlings of whatever aspect of physiognomy ought to be free from tribute, since the sacred laws in Catholic nations demanded that orphans should always have special protection. The *junta superior* or board of finance of Mexico favored this measure and recommended it to Viceroy Marquina, who submitted the decision to the Council of the Indies so that the king might decide what was best.⁶¹

Few of the members of the castes possessed property and some had no homes; indeed their condition was really miserable. They were frequently at the mercy of the local officials who by harsh treatment contributed much to their wretchedness. The public-spirited Abad Queipo believed that this class was wicked, poor, dependent, ill-educated, and delinquent, but it was marvelous that it was not more

⁶⁰"Representación a la regencia. . ." Valladolid, May 30, 1810. *In Mora, Obras sueltas*, I, 149-150; Representación al rey, Valladolid, May 30, 1810, AGI, 2375 (95-4-2). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁶¹Consejo de las Indias. Madrid, Dec. 17, 1802, AGI, 1140 (88-1-3). Audiencia de Méjico.

delinquent, and that there were even some good customs in this group which were observed by many of the individuals.⁶² The castes supported the creoles in their opposition to the Europeans for the only reason, said the fearless ecclesiastic, that they were of another country and belonged to the dominant class. He thought that a revolution would cause the destruction of both classes and of the country, as had happened in French Santo Domingo under similar circumstances.⁶³

At first nobles were not permitted to intermarry with the castes, but, when the viceroy of Buenos Aires reported the number that had already contracted matrimony with negroes and mulattoes, the king on October 15, 1805, granted this right to the upper class; later on December 19, 1809, the decree was also applied to all the viceroyalty of Mexico.⁶⁴ Thus it seems that the Spanish government had to confess its failure to maintain the rigid lines of social cleavage in America.

Negroes were imported into Mexico shortly after the conquest when Indian slavery was forbidden and because their labor was needed in sugar growing in the low coastal regions. They were more useful in agriculture than the natives, but slavery never played as great a part in New Spain as in Brazil, the West Indies, and the United States. According to the census of 1793 there were scarcely six thousand negroes in all Mexico, and not more than nine or ten thousand slaves altogether. Baron von Humboldt stated that one could traverse the whole city of Mexico without seeing a negro face, and that household service was not performed by slaves. In the Spanish dependencies negroes were better protected by the laws than in the colonies of other European nations. The laws were always in favor of liberty; hence manumissions were frequent. A slave could

⁶²Mora, I, 56; Humboldt, I, 211.

⁶³Mora, I, 148-149.

⁶⁴"Cédula concediendo á los vireyes la facultad de dar permiso para que los nobles contraigan matrimonio con negros, mulatos y otras castas." *In* Hernández y Dávalos, II, 305-306.

force his master to grant him freedom by paying him a sum of three or four hundred pesos; he could contract marriage, and buy his wife and children. When cruelly treated, slaves might appeal to the *audiencia*; if they were mutilated they became free. In 1803 Humboldt saw two negro women freed in this way because of the inhumanity of their mistress toward them.⁶⁵

The negroes had many pernicious habits inherited from their African ancestors, and they readily acquired all kinds of new vices. They naturally had much in common with the native population, but the laws prohibited them from living among the Indians on account of their vicious traits.⁶⁶ Negroes often married, nevertheless, with the natives and frequently became mischief makers among the wild mountain Indians. It was said that Indian women preferred negroes to the men of their own race.⁶⁷ Negroes and mulattoes had to pay tribute to the king, and this became as much of a hardship for them as it was for the castes.⁶⁸ By the time of independence the negro population was rapidly being absorbed; therefore it took little part in the movement for freedom from the mother country. The process of assimilation was so complete that to-day the negroes of Mexico have all but disappeared. There are only a few communities in which negroid features and characteristics remain dominant.

The racial problem was still further complicated on account of the Manila galleons bringing Chinese and Malays, who established themselves in Mexico.⁶⁹ Filipinos were included in the crews which manned the galleons, and frequently when they once reached Mexico, after the many

⁶⁵*Ensayo político sobre Nueva España*, I, 252-258. For the rules concerning the treatment of negro slaves see José Antonio Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud* (Barcelona, 1875-1879). This author is the chief Spanish authority on negro slavery.

⁶⁶*Recopilación*, ley 29, tit. 5, lib. 7.

⁶⁷Humboldt, I, 185.

⁶⁸*Recopilación*, leyes 1-2, tit. 5, lib. 7.

⁶⁹Humboldt, I, 155.

hardships of the long voyage, they deserted and were only too glad to remain in New Spain.⁷⁰

The small foreign non-Spanish element of the population, which consisted mainly of Portuguese, French, Germans, English, and Dutch, was unimportant and did not take part in the movement for independence. The Spanish laws always discouraged the migration of foreigners to the American colonies for fear that they would bring their heretical religious beliefs with them to scatter among the Indians, and that they might monopolize trade and commerce. Even immigration into Mexico by families from Louisiana, after the transfer of that territory to the French, and later to the United States, was not encouraged. In 1805, when some people from the frontier province, who, in fact, were good Catholics and natives of the Canary Islands, wanted to live in New Spain and had already sent their personal possessions on certain ships, a long and drawn-out legal process was necessary to prove their loyalty and obedience to the Spanish monarch. Finally the king granted permission for them to come to Mexico and bring their goods with them; they were to have all the exemptions and privileges granted by the laws of the Indies to new populations.⁷¹ As there were no treaties establishing any right to naturalization, foreigners were quite dependent on the Spanish law for their status.

Requests for naturalization were frequent in the latter part of the eighteenth century, and occasionally a foreigner was allowed to become a citizen in Mexico. Pedro Puglia, a native of the archbishopric of Milan, a doctor of medicine, and a resident of Mexico, who asked for naturalization and the right to remain in the colony without being molested or hindered in his profession by the board of physicians or any other tribunal, did not have such good luck. The Council of the Indies was not willing to grant him citizenship in

⁷⁰Paul S. Taylor, "Spanish Seamen in the New World," in *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Nov. 1922, pp. 649-650.

⁷¹José de Iturrigaray to Miguel Cayetano Soler, Mexico, Oct. 27, 1807, num. 1377, AGI, 90-1-8 (Audiencia de Mexico), papeleta 84, BL.

New Spain because he went to the Indies with the royal permission by the *vía reservada*, or through that of the king's ministers, but not with the consent of the Council.⁷² Sometimes viceroys recommended the naturalization of foreigners, as Flórez did in the case of Jorge Parrodi, a native of Genoa, who lived in Mexico and was a deputy of the mining tribunal. He owned rich mines, had married in the country, gave alms to beggars, was devoted to religion, and was always prompt to serve the king; therefore the monarch granted the request of the executive.⁷³

In 1792 Josef María Aycardo y Campo, a native of Genoa, who had come to live in Guanajuato eighteen years earlier, asked for a letter of naturalization so that he might work any mines in the province according to the laws. He won the esteem of the natives, was of good demeanor, obeyed the laws, paid all the royal contributions demanded, and was always ready to serve the king.⁷⁴ Another case was that of Domingo Melica, born in the city of Saviliano in Piedmont. He had obtained the degree of doctor of medicine from the University of Turin and then went to reside in Querétaro where physicians were scarce; consequently his neighbors called on him to cure their infirmities. When the *protomedicato*, or board of physicians, found this out, it offered obstacles to his work because he was not a native of Mexico and had not been examined there; therefore, in order to carry on his profession, he requested naturalization in 1793. The Council of the Indies declared that Melica had only lived four years in New Spain and that was not long enough, but owing to the lack of doctors in Querétaro it recommended that he be allowed to reside there and exercise his profession for twenty years, the time of

⁷²Antonio Porlier al Señor Don Francisco Moñino. Palacio, Dec. 11, 1788, num. 7, AGI, 1775 (91-6-10). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁷³Manuel Antonio Flórez a Antonio Valdés. Mexico, Aug. 27, 1789, num. 1241, AGI, 1776, (91-6-11). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁷⁴Expediente de Don Josef María Aycardo y Campo natural de Genoba, y residente en la de Guanajuato, solicitando se le conceda carta de naturaleza. Guanajuato, May 4, 1792, AGI, 1778, (91-6-13). Audiencia de Méjico.

residence for foreigners before they might obtain naturalization, and then the matter would be considered.⁷⁵

In 1797 Carlos Brun from Turin, Italy, who had lived as a miner in Guanajuato since 1769, requested citizenship in New Spain. He had resided there for the required number of years, but was not married and did not have a house or landed possessions valued at 40,000 ducats, as the law provided. The Council of the Indies finally granted him tolerance for four years if he would pay 8000 *reales* for the favor, within which time he was to marry and fulfill the other qualifications for naturalization.⁷⁶ In 1799 the Council likewise recommended for citizenship Pedro Antoneli, a Corsican resident in Mexico City since 1771; he had there married María Michaela Garro y Guraya, a young lady from one of the chief commercial houses, had two children, and after her death married the daughter of a judge of the audiencia, and was the owner of *haciendas* or estates.⁷⁷ Two Italians, Antonio Bonaneli and Josef Perovani, were recommended for naturalization in Mexico in 1804. The former gentleman came to America in 1794 with Viceroy Branciforte, and the latter was a painter who went to Vera Cruz with his wife, after spending some time in the United States and Havana. Neither of them had quite fulfilled the requirements of the law for citizenship, but they were considered very useful to the nation and were granted the privilege to remain in the country until they could obtain their papers according to law.⁷⁸ Ricardo Raynal Keene, a native of Queen Anne County, Maryland, in the United States, enjoyed naturalization in the dominions of Spain in 1809, when the captain-general of Cuba

⁷⁵Consulta de la camara de las Indias. Madrid, May 14, 1793, AGI, 1778 (91-6-13). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁷⁶Francisco Cerda al tesorero del consejo. Madrid, March 16, 1797, AGI, 1780 (91-6-14). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁷⁷Consulta de la camara de las Indias. Madrid, June 27, 1799, AGI, 1781 (91-6-16). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁷⁸Expediente de Don Antonio Bonaneli, Napolitano de nación, y vecino de la ciudad de Mexico. Nov. 5, 1804, num. 17, AGI, 1795 (91-7-5). Audiencia de Méjico; Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Dec. 14, 1804, *ibid.*

granted it to him and orders were given for the proper letter to be sent from Spain.⁷⁹ Felipe Huateburg, a native of Hanover, who lived in Sweden and later in Guanajuato and Mexico City was not granted Mexican citizenship when he asked for it in 1810.⁸⁰

After the insurrections began requests for naturalization grew more frequent. In 1813 Antonio Amelung, born in Germany and who lived in Yucatan, requested naturalization papers and agreed to obey the king and the laws, also to profess the Catholic religion. The governor of the province declared him to be a good man, hence the Council of the Indies recommended him to the king.⁸¹ In the same year Luis Guide, a native of Venetia, an inhabitant in Mexico, and a tailor and merchant by profession, asked permission to become a Mexican citizen.⁸² Cayetano Carenci, an Italian born in Genoa and captain of the militia of Tabasco, was chosen *alcalde* by that *ayuntamiento* or town council, but one of the voters opposed his election because he was a foreigner, therefore Carenci requested a letter of naturalization in order that he might obtain employment in Mexico. The fiscal of New Spain thought that he deserved to be granted citizenship since he met all the requirements for it; he showed love for Spain, and had many merits.⁸³ Bartolmé Aycardo, who came from Genoa to Cádiz and then went to Mexico, also requested naturalization. In New Spain he married María Ana Ramiz, a native of the country, and was considered a good man since he educated two orphans, gave gifts to the state, and held minor offices

⁷⁹Consulta del consejo de estado. Cádiz, May 7, 1813, AGI, 1822 (92-1-8). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁸⁰Expediente de Don Felipe Lailson de Huateburg natural de Hanover y residente en la ciudad de Mexico, solicitando carta de naturaleza . . . AGI, 1821 (92-1-7). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁸¹Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, Aug. 7, 1819, AGI, 1148 (88-1-11). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁸²D. Luis Guide natural de Venetia, de oficio sastre y mercader . . . solicita carta de naturaleza. Vera Cruz, April 28, 1813, num. 6, AGI, 1900 (92-5-8). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁸³Tomás Moyano al Señor presidente del consejo de Indias. Palacio, Oct. 17, 1815, and Jan. 29, 1816, AGI, 1825 (92-1-11). Audiencia de Méjico.

like that of *alcalde* of the ward.⁸⁴ Likewise in 1818 Francisco Corroy, a doctor and surgeon who lived in Tabasco, petitioned the sovereign for the rights of citizenship. He married María de Carmen Campos of the same province, gave proof of his fidelity to the king and of his humanity in the cure of the poor, and he introduced vaccination into many districts without pay; therefore his naturalization was enthusiastically recommended to the monarch.⁸⁵ The chief contribution of foreigners in Mexico to independence was their sympathy for the movement and their dissemination of progressive ideas and literature among the intellectual classes.⁸⁶

The Indians were always an important class in Mexico; in 1808, according to Alamán, there were 2,400,000 of them, forming two-fifths of the population.⁸⁷ In 1810 Francisco Navarro y Noriega maintained that there were 3,676,000 Indian natives in New Spain.⁸⁸ From the first the Spanish laws made the Indians a privileged but dependent race, granted them special protection, and guaranteed them very humane treatment. They were declared to be free vassals of the king, yet were treated like children or wards of the crown.⁸⁹ The idea of their inferiority thus arose and it continued for many years for the purposes of exploitation. Some people pretended that the Indians were incapable of reasoning and were of a lower human species because they wished to condemn them to perpetual servitude. Their capacities were purposely stunted. They were forbidden to make jewelry, although the Aztec jewelry was often superior to that of the Spaniards. As a result many of

⁸⁴Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, June 19, 1816, num. 11, AGI, 1146 (88-1-9). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁸⁵*Ibid.*, Madrid, May 8, 1819, AGI, 1148 (88-1-11). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁸⁶For further account of foreigners in the Spanish colonies consult Lillian E. Fisher, *Viceregal Administration in the Spanish-American Colonies* (Berkeley, 1926). 323 et seq.

⁸⁷*Historia de Méjico*, I, 22; Humboldt, I, 155.

⁸⁸"Memoria sobre la población del reino de Nueva España." Mexico, 1820. In *Papeles Varios*, 161, num. 7, p. 24.

⁸⁹Juan de Solórzano y Pereyra, *Política indiana* (Madrid, 1626-1639), 1776. Francisco Ramiro de Valenzuela ed., I, lib. 2, cap. 1, art. 28, p. 63.

the excellent native arts were lost.⁹⁰ But worst of all the Indians were kept from advancing in civilization because they were deprived of the exercise of their inherited talents. The mission system, intended to help and transform the natives, only too often hindered them. They remained as thoroughly pagan as before, for the priests did not realize the strength of tradition in the savage mind. The instruction put more emphasis on repeating and memorizing the Catechism and religious phrases than on the establishment of such influences as would lead the Indians gradually to adopt the ways of enlightened society. By his unprogressive methods in teaching a new religion the missionary struck a blow at the most vital and permanent element of the Indian's character and traditions, suppressing his individuality and independence. The privileges of minors were given to the natives to free them from the frauds of the Spaniards; they were not subject to military service or to the rigors of the Inquisition; and they were freed from all taxes except the tribute, which every native man from eighteen to fifty years of age paid once a year. They did not even have to pay the hated alcabala, and the laws allowed them freedom to sell their products. The Indians lived in separate towns governed by themselves; but in spite of their privileges they were vexed by all the other classes, whom they regarded as foreigners.⁹¹

The unlucky natives were not permitted to own land individually. Antonio de San Miguel, bishop of Michoacán, said that they cultivated the common property given to them under lease by the intendants, that the proceeds of their work entered into the royal coffers, and the treasury officials kept separate account of it. For the last twenty years this communal property was fruitful, but the intendants could not dispose of it in favor of the Indians. The ecclesiastic asserted that the natives were tired of claiming

⁹⁰Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Mexico* (San Francisco, 1883-1887), III, 662; *Native Races of the Pacific States of North America* (New York, 1875), II, 488-490.

⁹¹Alamán, I, 22-24; Humboldt, I, 203.

aid from the public treasury because of the long delay due to the Board of Finance asking for official documents from the fiscal and assessor of the viceroy. Entire years passed while the *expedientes* or official documents were formed and at the end of the period the Indians remained without a reply. Hence the intendants were accustomed to regard the Indian money in the public treasury as if it did not have any definite application; for example, in 1798 the intendant of Valladolid sent to Madrid about 40,000 pesos of this money which had been collected during twelve years. He told the king that it was a free and patriotic gift which the natives of Mexico made to him so that the war with England might continue. The bishop, who estimated that there were 810,000 Indian families in New Spain, hoped that they might be granted a portion of the unoccupied lands.⁹²

The local officials, the *alcaldes mayores*, and later their successors the subdelegates, greatly oppressed the Indians by demands for personal service, dues, and excessive taxes. They forced the poor wretches to buy articles which they did not want, caused them to get into debt, and sometimes treated them as real slaves. Yet even in the midst of such abuses the natives made some agricultural and industrial progress.⁹³ The missions were a part of the paternalistic system for dealing with the Indians and frequently the priests also annoyed them. The parochial dues were quite heavy for most of them; they paid two pesos for baptism, four for marriage, six and one-half for burial, and five or six pesos in addition for voluntary offerings. On one hand the laws protected the Indians, on the other, they deprived them of the most important rights enjoyed by other citizens, and placed insurmountable barriers between them and the other castes.⁹⁴ Hence the very system intended to protect and aid the red men only hindered them in the develop-

⁹²Humboldt, I, 207-208, 212.

⁹³*Instrucciones que los virreyes de Nueva España dejaron a sus sucesores*, 61-62; Humboldt, I, 210.

⁹⁴Humboldt, I, 204.

ment of self-reliance and made them more suspicious of their white superiors.

The indigines were divided into two groups—tributary Indians and Indian nobles or *caciques*. The latter were to enjoy the privileges of the nobility of Castile, but those distinctions were only illusory, and it was difficult to distinguish nobles from the other natives. The *caciques* obtained the hereditary right to collect for the Spanish administration the tribute from their own people; however, they soon became terrible oppressors of the Indians because of their influence over them, and the undesirable *caciquismo* or chief-rule developed. Although the *caciques* were the only persons in the Indian towns who spoke Spanish, they were quite as ignorant as their wards, whom they were interested in keeping in the most profound ignorance. They were still overlords as in the days before the conquest, and continued to harass their unfortunate fellow beings.⁹⁵ The intendant system decreased the petty vexations to which the American natives were subject, and they began to enjoy for the first time the benefits that the laws guaranteed to them.

During the last decades of Spanish rule in America the mass of Indians presented a harrowing spectacle of misery and poverty. They had been driven on to the less fertile lands, where they lived in indolence, and even when wealthy dressed like the poorest individual among them.⁹⁶ They occupied the menial positions in the towns and cities and labored in the mines. The condition of those who worked in the cloth or woolen mills was often so intolerable that many died from exhaustion and cruel treatment. They were frequently locked in sugar mills for whole years without being allowed to go out on the street.⁹⁷

Doctor Manuel Antonio Sandoval accurately depicted the manner of living of the Mexican Indians in an unpublished book entitled *Reflexiones sobre la naturaleza y caracter de*

⁹⁵*Ibid.*, I, 196-197.

⁹⁶Humboldt, I, 201-203.

⁹⁷Croix, Instrucción que . . . dejó, AGI, 88-5-13. BL.

los Indios, opresiones que padecen, sus pocas medras en materia de religion, la causa de ellas, y modo de remediarlas. He stated that the first thing noticed about the natives was their humility, poverty, nudeness, and misery. Their living conditions were very wretched, because they had no bed, table, chairs, or boxes, but only the implements to grind their maize and make the *tortillas* of which their daily food consisted, with perhaps a little chile pepper, dried meat, and salad. The Indians always preferred to live in the country and when they did reside in towns they tried to hide in order not to be registered; they arranged the doors or entrances to their houses so that no one could see how many persons entered or went out of them. They avoided communication with Spaniards, but when there was absolute need of it they answered with reserve or very obscurely and nobody could get any definite idea from their words. The doctor alleged that there was a kind of "republic" among the natives, with a government similar to that of Freemasonry, since they were very subordinate to commanders or chiefs who controlled them at will, and they resisted any measure of the superior government not in accord with the ideas of those chiefs.

Many unfavorable opinions were expressed in Mexico relative to the Indians. Sandoval said that they were addicted to the vices of drunkenness, lewdness, and thievery; they were naturally impertinent and ferocious and blood-thirsty in quarrels. They were inherently lazy, and the owners of haciendas and workshops had to advance wages to them, for they would not work without this. They frequently ran away after they had obtained the money and when they did work they needed overseers to prevent them from resting continually. In the morning it was necessary to go from hut to hut to call them to work and sometimes they hid; therefore the owners of estates, not knowing what measures to take with the Indians, put them in fetters and locked them in a large room from which they were taken to work every morning and returned at night. Then their wives and parents hurried to the justices of the district and

demanded that they be set free; as a result, farmers were without recourse and the natives only became more insolent. Sandoval said that the Indians knew no honor; when they were outraged it made little impression upon them, and punishments imposed for crimes did not inconvenience them, for they went right on with their vices. Married men and women separated voluntarily without divorce; their notorious ignorance and rusticity seemed to serve them as a shield for the free and easy lives which they lived. They did not want instruction and resisted it for their children, preferring them to follow their own disgraceful conduct. They rarely told the truth even when it would have been to their advantage for fear that they might be deceived; they were exceedingly cautious and on that account they opposed the Spanish language; when used as witnesses they swore falsely, so that they could not be depended upon for evidence. They gloried in poverty, which they found very convenient because temporal possessions hindered their fleeing from debts, from the obligations of the church, and from the restrictions of the repartimientos and the taxes paid to *alcaldes mayors*, who antagonized and oppressed them by imprisonment and the lash. Sandoval maintained that they were ignorant of religion, indeed that they showed a kind of spite toward it. They did not know the first requisites necessary to make a confession, namely grief or conscience, without which there could be no sacrament of penitence. They considered many things as sins which were not sins; and they would not confess a sin on account of shame or malice, but afterwards in confession when the omission became apparent, they said they had forgotten it. When asked by the confessor how many sins they committed each year they answered "two or three." In the *fiestas* of the church they always caused great disturbances, since they ended them by eating and drinking to excess, and the priests did not try to stop them. They were influenced by Indian quacks who pretended to cure them by superstitious words before they confessed their sins to the priests; those imposters taught

them a thousand errors, such as that married persons might separate for any motive.⁸⁸

The bishop of Guadalajara also described the unfavorable condition of the natives, therefore let us hear what he had to say on the subject. He asserted that the Indians lived as miserably as the lower classes without education and regular industry; naturally they were prone to idleness, nakedness, drunkenness, and many other excesses. The observant prelate showed that the privileges granted them by the church and state did not make them any happier. If they fasted or kept religious *fietas* they would not work afterwards; if parochial and other dues, the *diezmos* (tithes) or *alcabala*, were demanded of them, they made no effort to promote agriculture or industry and advance their own interests; if the church gave them all kinds of spiritual favors, they did not, on account of them, try to rectify their customs; and although the state provided fiscal protectors and magistrates to aid them in their business they did not desire them. The bishop added that they only made use of favors and exemptions to become more unfortunate; they abused their protection only to maintain themselves in disorder and perverted religious privileges to flee from the church and from the instruction of the priests; and they had no other care than to earn the little tribute which they paid each year and to raise the few products needed to live on in their misery and nakedness. They engaged only in the lightest occupations. At times they enjoyed large possessions of very fertile lands, yet they neither cultivated them nor leased them to their neighbors for that purpose. He depicted their homes as places of misery and sordidness—mere huts within which lived and slept children and grown people, the well and the sick. The worst injuries resulted from this because diseases were easily communicated, also corrupt morals, for the children easily learned the bad traits

⁸⁸Dr. Antonio Sandoval, *Reflexiones sobre la naturaleza y caracter de los Indios, opresiones que padecen, sus pocas medras en materia de religion, la causa de ellas, y modo de remediarlos*. AGI, 1778 (91-6-13). Audiencia de Méjico.

and customs of their elders. The good man saw no remedy for those conditions until the Indians should have public schools and be taught Christian ideals while still young. Furthermore, he believed that the natives should have their own lands to cultivate. In some towns they had scarcely any while in others they enjoyed great communal possessions. Experience showed that they did not cultivate the land which they held in common nor allowed others to do it by leasing; hence the bishop thought that, in order to be useful to the population, every Indian should have his own land, with power to lease it, transfer it, acquire more, and transmit it to his heirs without the loss of the products increased by his fatigue and sweat.⁹⁹

Some people had more favorable opinions about the Indians and thought that they had advanced as rapidly as they could. They believed that many of the adverse conditions under which the natives lived were not their fault. Doctor Sandoval said that it was not surprising that the Indians resisted a religion foreign and unknown to them and full of incomprehensible mysteries; consequently it was no fault of theirs that they were irreligious but that of the priests and the bad example of the people around them. The natives could not see that they were any worse than the priests and *alcaldes mayores* who oppressed them; they did not care to embrace a religion which the priests made palpable to them by words alone and not by works; little was there cause for surprise that they found their real consolation in the solitude of the mountains and God's great out of doors.¹⁰⁰

Abad Queipo believed that Spain had been very generous toward the indigines. He declared that lands had been given to the Indian towns, but individuals were absolutely free to acquire them at a moderate price. The Spaniards had

⁹⁹Juan Cruz to the king. Guadalajara, Jan 17, 1805, AGI, 104-7-17 (Audiencia de Guadalajara), pp. 17-19, 22. BL.

¹⁰⁰Reflexiones sobre la naturaleza y caracter de los Indios, opresiones que padecen, sus pocas medras en materia de religion, la causa de ellas, y modo de remediarlas. AGI, 1778 (91-6-13). Audiencia de Méjico.

not therefore despoiled the Indians of the country, although by law they were able to do this. They had conceded to the Indians the sovereignty of all the Spanish nation and its vast possessions, removing them from a tyrannical and despotic native government so that they might live as citizens under a moderate and just administration. They had been placed under the protection of a national force, kept in peace and safety for three centuries, and had not been obliged to take up arms or shed their own blood in common defense. Many spiritual and temporal privileges and legal protection had been accorded the red men; these were very useful to them at first, although, perhaps, they injured them later. If the natives were not more advanced, Queipo maintained, it was because they were naturally backward in civilization and on account of other causes.¹⁰¹

Drunkenness was very common among the Indians who inhabited the valley of Mexico, Puebla, and Tlascala because the *maguey* plant, producing a cheap fermented liquor, was cultivated in those vicinities. Baron von Humboldt stated that in the capital the police sent out carts to pick up the drunkards on the streets as if they were corpses. They were conveyed to the guardhouse and when sobered were assigned to cleaning the streets for three days. On the fourth day they were set free, but many of them were caught again in the same week. The excessive use of intoxicating liquors injured the health of the natives, yet they frequently lived to be one hundred years old and were still active; many were completely ignorant of their age, having lost count of the years.¹⁰²

The Indians were just as dissatisfied with their lot under the social, political, and economic system of Mexico as were the mestizos and castes. Bishop San Miguel of Michoacán ably sums up their malcontent:

"The Indians and the castes cultivate the lands; they

¹⁰¹"A todos los habitantes de Michoacán." Feb. 15, 1811. In *Colección de varios escritos del Abad Queipo*, num. 2, p. 8; "Carta pastoral," Valladolid, Sept. 26, 1812, *ibid.*, num. 3, pp. 47-49. G.

¹⁰²*Ensayo político sobre Nueva España*, I, 174-175.

serve the wealthier people and live by the work of their hands only. From this there results between the Indians and the whites this opposition of interests, this reciprocal hatred which so easily springs up among those who possess everything and those who have nothing, between masters and slaves. Thus it is that we see on the one hand the effects of envy and of discord, cunning, robbery, the inclination to injure the rich in their interests; and on the other hand, arrogance, hardness, and the desire of abusing on all occasions the weakness of the Indian. I am not ignorant that these evils spring in all parts from the great inequality of conditions. But in America they are still more terrible because there is no middle class; one is rich or miserable, noble or infamous by right and act. Effectively the Indians and the castes are in the greatest humiliation. The color of the natives, their ignorance, and more than all their wretchedness, place them at an infinite distance from the whites, who are the individuals who occupy the first place in the population of New Spain. The privileges which the laws seem to grant the Indians bring them few benefits, and it can almost be said that they injure them."¹⁰⁸

Queipo said that the opposition of interests between the Indians and the élite of society caused envy, robbery, bad service on the part of the one, and mistrust, usury, and hardness on the part of the other. The laws of their "communities" profited the Indians little, as they were felt to be burdensome and were hated. The difficulty of utilizing their products had greatly increased due to the code of the intendancies, since nothing might be disposed of without recourse to the Board of Finance of Mexico City. The indigines were isolated and deprived of the enlightenment which they should have received from communication and intercourse with other people; as a result they clung tenaciously to their own language, customs, usages, and their

¹⁰⁸ *Ensayo político sobre Nueva España*, I, 206.

gross superstitions. They were prohibited by the law from making any substantial contract and they could not pledge themselves for more than fifty pesos, therefore it was impossible for them to better their fortunes or to take any step forward to raise themselves from misery.¹⁰⁴ Little effort was made to improve their condition, although occasionally a voice was heard which advocated reform, as for instance, the noble Abad Queipo advised that they should be freed from the burdensome tribute.¹⁰⁵ The abolition of the tribute for the Indians and also the castes; putting an end to the idea of their wickedness, but declaring them honest and capable to obtain civil offices; a free distribution of all unoccupied and community lands among these people; and an agrarian law like that of the provinces of Asturias and Galicia in Spain, which opened the lands of the large estates to the people by means of leases for twenty or thirty years; the free permission to acquire the rights of citizens in Indian towns, to construct houses in them after paying for the soil; the sufficient remuneration of all territorial judges except *alcaldes ordinarios*, who should serve in their offices free; the unhindered right to establish cotton and woolen factories; and the removal of the alcabala on the importation and exportation of native products—this was the reform program suggested by the worthy bishop. He thought that these measures would not injure the royal treasury, but that on the contrary within ten years its funds would be increased, tripled or quadrupled.¹⁰⁶

How to combat the widespread poverty of the lower class was always a serious problem in New Spain. Many members of the castes did not know where they would obtain their next meal; in the cities the many vagabonds and beggars lived from hand to mouth, just as is the case to-day. The laws of the Indies ordered viceroys to compel all able-bodied men either to seek work for themselves or assign

¹⁰⁴“Representación sobre la inmunidad personal del clero . . .” *In* Mora, I, 54-56.

¹⁰⁵“Representación a la regencia . . .” Valladolid, May 30, 1810, *ibid.*, I, 149.

¹⁰⁶“Representación sobre la inmunidad personal del clero . . .” *In* Mora, I, 60-61.

them to public tasks, send them to the *presidios*, and make them serve in the army.¹⁰⁷ But beggary never could be abolished, for the ease with which food might be obtained from charitable organizations only encouraged it.¹⁰⁸ Of the 810,000 families in Mexico in 1799 Abad Queipo estimated that 540,000 were poor and, counting five to each family, there were at least 2,700,000 poor people in the viceroyalty. The honorable bishop thought that the poor families of peon laborers on the large estates got along best. They, however, enjoyed only the bare necessities of life; families in the colder regions expended fifty pesos annually for living and those in the warm lands seventy pesos.¹⁰⁹

Another serious problem which existed in Mexico since the earliest times was vagabondage. Pertaining to this group of people there were families on almost all the haciendas who fled there from their native towns or villages to live on the estates without any permanent home, salary or rations. When the owners tolerated them, these people aided them with their personal work in sowing, reaping, at *rodeos*, and in whatever they could find to do. They did not cultivate the land and were frequently idle; therefore crimes and robbery originated with them. Díaz de Salcedo, the intendant of San Luis Potosí, thought that they should be gathered into towns and be given lands to cultivate and work, so that they might become useful citizens.¹¹⁰

The worthy bishop of Guadalajara suggested some remedies for beggary and vagabondage—the pest of the state. He advocated the construction of workshops for the instruction, punishment, and occupation of the idle among

¹⁰⁷ *Recopilación*, leyes 2-4, tit. 4, lib. 7.

¹⁰⁸ *Instrucciones que los vireyes de Nueva España dejaron a sus sucesores*, 307.

¹⁰⁹ "Representación sobre la inmunidad personal del clero. . ." *In Mora*, I, 61.

¹¹⁰ Díaz de Salcedo to Revillagigedo, *Relación de las mas principales disposiciones económicas*. San Luis Potosí, Dec. 4, 1792, AGI, 89-6-19 (Audencia de Mexico). papeleta 77. BL.

the lower classes and the Indians. He did not have much use for the prisons where such people were generally kept, since the memory of their confessions to priests made him shudder; consequently he also favored prison reform, for instance, the better distribution of buildings to prevent contagious diseases, better ventilation, instruction in the elements of cleanliness and sanitation, and most important of all—occupation. He alleged that the prisons which existed were dwellings of idleness and repose and sinks of all kinds of vices—a curse to religion. Only by constant labor, he maintained, could delinquency be corrected and the community be relieved from supporting hordes of men well able to live by the work of their hands.¹³¹

This problem of idleness had not been solved in 1814, for at that time Francisco López asserted that:

“Idleness, the mother of all vices is dangerous to the state. Idle and badly informed men are the pests of republics, since they corrupt social virtues and morals; on account of this there are laws against them in all kingdoms from remote antiquity. Unfortunately I have seen in the provinces of my command many idle men and families without occupation or employment, from which some lose all shame and go about nude. . . . Being accustomed to suffer hunger they sustain themselves on bad foods and this is the cause of the diseases of which they are the victims.”

In order to avoid idleness, López suggested that the justices should appoint two or three persons to make lists of vagabonds, and then those officials were to see that loafers sought employment within eight days after being notified to do so. If they did not find work for themselves the justices were to send all those fit to bear arms to the nearest military commandant in the town or neighborhood, who could assign them a place in the troops for eight years. Those not fit

¹³¹Juan Cruz to the king. Guadalajara, Jan. 17, 1805, AGI, 104-7-17 (Audiencia de Guadalajara), pp. 27-28. BL.

to become soldiers were to be transferred, for four years, to factories and workshops operated by honorable managers. Women were to be put in the homes of respectable persons who would watch their conduct while they performed their tasks. The justices should see that those individuals were paid wages according to their fitness and prevent all persons from entering towns without passports.¹¹² The difficulty was that such wise plans could not be put into effect during the turbulent times of revolution because there were few public works to which they might be assigned.¹¹³

The total population of New Spain in 1804 was estimated by Baron von Humboldt to be 5,857,000 persons, of which number 75,000 were Europeans, 1,000,000 Mexican Spaniards, 2,500,000 were Indians, and the rest were half-breeds. These figures were based upon records of birth and baptisms and therefore may be considered fairly accurate. In this enumeration there were more men than women, the ratio being 100 males to 95 females.¹¹⁴ In 1810 Francisco Navarro y Noriega declared that the aggregate population was 6,122,354 souls, among which were 1,097,928 Spaniards, 1,338,706 castes, 3,676,281 Indians, and 9,439 ecclesiastics, making fifty-two persons to the square league.¹¹⁵ At this time Humboldt believed that 7,000,000 was a safe computation of the inhabitants of Mexico.¹¹⁶ Since this population was anything but homogeneous, the differences of character among the inhabitants imposed a heavy administrative burden upon Spain, which, however, took no account of social dissimilarities; thus the government of the colonies became gradually more ineffective. With the lessening of the disciplinary power came the growth of self-consciousness and opposition of the creole-

¹¹²Francisco López, "Sobre el remedio para mejorar los pueblos y hacer trabajar a la gente ociosa." Aguayo, Aug. 26, 1814. In *Matamoras Archivos*, vol. 16, pp. 2-4. BL.

¹¹³Andrés de Salaoña, Feb. 13, 1823, *ibid.*, vol. 10, p. 86. BL.

¹¹⁴*Ensayo político sobre Nueva España*, I, 114-127, 263-264.

¹¹⁵"Memoria sobre la población del reino de Nueva España." Mexico, 1820. In *Papeles varios*, 161, num. 7, p. 24.

¹¹⁶*Ensayo político sobre Nueva España*, I, 128, 10.

mestizo groups which soon developed a certain sense of independence.

The sharp class distinctions between gachupines, creoles, mestizos, castes, negroes, foreigners, and Indians promoted anything but progress and harmony. Those cleavages of a polyglot population caused mistrust, jealousy, and hatred; and, in fact, helped to loosen the bonds of society. Under frontier conditions far removed from the mother country, some groups developed more rapidly than others and obtained new viewpoints on practically all subjects; however Spain was too blind to see the change. The administration of the peninsula persisted in maintaining the lines of separation between classes, the old policy of privilege and unjust discrimination, and the exclusion of creoles, mestizos, and Indians from social and political functions. It kept alive foolish antagonisms by its uncompromising attitude, and continually looked to the past for its ideas, when the colonies needed many innovations. The trouble was that Spain could not adapt itself to the changed conditions and needs of American society. Hence in the course of time the foundations of a new society were laid in New Spain, although the Spanish government was entirely ignorant of this. Animated by new influences one group of the population, in which the germs of independence were to find fertile soil, was destined to rise and the other to decline because it clung tenaciously to the old European traditions and customs, not suitable for a new country. The number of creoles and mestizos born in Mexico began to exceed the number of Spanish immigrants, the progressive element prevailing over the conservative, thereby preparing the way for independence.

II

THE INTELLECTUAL BACKGROUND

Consciousness of the unsatisfactory condition of the Mexican people was intensified by the intellectual differences and the new attitude of mind that appeared in some of the classes of society during the latter eighteenth century. The struggle with nature in frontier communities tended to cast aside Old World conventions, to develop common sense, and to promote the spirit of equality, because every pioneer had to work hard to hold his property against attacks of savage natives, and he came to be valued by his personal worth, not on account of his ancestry. The normal influence of frontier life was the creation of individualism and a democratic spirit. Those noble forces of social life were checked and modified by the numerous restrictions imposed by the mother country; but in spite of this, ideas gradually changed from the Spanish standards.

The kind of immigrants who came to the New World also helped to bring about this change. They were persons of boldness and superior energy who dared to break home ties and venture out into an unknown country; naturally their weaker and less efficient countrymen remained in Spain. When they emigrated they met new scenes, experiences, and expectations, which awakened thought. The physical activity which those men displayed in their explorations, sufferings, and hardships of frontier life was remarkable, and never was experienced by those who remained in the mother country. This was the beginning of the difference between the populations of Europe and America. At first the *conquistadores* were more interested in their immediate personal wants than in the general social welfare. The vast size of the new territories and the absence of communication caused great achievement in per-

sonal economic affairs, while social and intellectual matters followed the traditional Spanish course and remained unprogressive.

Harsh, indeed, have been the Anglo-Saxon criticisms of Spanish colonial culture, and many false ideas, born of ignorance and national prejudice, have sprung up. Spanish-American culture was nevertheless a potent factor in the development of the colonies, it was always advancing, it did not fall far short of culture in any other colonial area, and intellectual conditions helped to prepare the way for the independence movement. For three hundred years Spain transmitted European institutions and civilization to the New World; the area and population affected were huge—greater than those of all her rivals combined. The fact that Mexico and the larger part of South America still have Spanish civilization and its influence is still strong in parts of the United States is perhaps the greatest tribute to the efficacy of that culture. Spain gave the colonies the best that she had in education and sometimes the creoles were better educated than their fathers born in the Peninsula.

The psychological transformation in the Spanish-American colonial mind was much slower than in the English dependencies, owing largely to the stereotyped instruction in the schools controlled almost exclusively by the clergy who tried to train everybody for service in the church. As a result religious education was overemphasized, to the exclusion of the scientific viewpoint and the critical spirit, which were not very evident until the latter part of the eighteenth century. The Inquisition did much to hinder the growth of intellectual progress by prohibiting the expression of new ideas and preventing the circulation of up-to-date books containing the latest discoveries of science and accounts of the greatest human achievements. The Index included within its list of condemned books a large number of serious, painstaking, and conscientious researches undertaken to enlarge the field of knowledge and to raise the standard of civilization. It was feared that such researches would lead to conclusions that might interfere with or

modify the unquestioned ideas of the past. The unprogressive policy found in the Index was the universal one adopted for the colonies by the administration of the peninsula, and for three centuries it was carried out to the letter by the governmental agencies in America. Every effort was made to instil this medieval policy in the public mind, and it was done with much success, since for many years the almost total absence of communication between the dependencies and European nations allowed the clergy and the Holy Office to have a free hand in moulding intellectual life.

The unprogressive spirit of those in authority and the fear of criticism of the established system was very evident when Doctor Manuel Antonio Sandoval, a lawyer and ecclesiastic of Mexico City, asked permission, in March, 1791, to print a work entitled *Reflexiones sobre la naturaleza y caracter de los Indios, opresiones que padecen, sus pocas medras en materia de religion, la causa de ellas, y el modo de remediarlas*. The fiscals by whom the work was examined reported that the author said that the Indians were unsociable with the Spaniards, reserved and malicious among themselves, lazy, devoted to the vices of drunkenness and inconstancy, timid and cowardly in mind, and ferocious and inhuman in quarrels, although they appeared humble, poor, naked, and miserable. He declared that their oppressions consisted principally in the commerce and repartimientos of the *alcaldes mayores*; their lack of progress was due to the excesses and usurious contracts of the *alcaldes*, and their backwardness in religion to their idolatrous customs or superstition, their little or no honor, and free and licentious life. The author criticized the priests very severely as the chief cause of the pitiful retrogression of the natives because of their carelessness in teaching the Christian doctrine and administering the holy sacraments, their greed in the exaction of dues, and their bad example. As remedies, he suggested that the conduct of the *alcaldes mayores* should be reformed, the youth educated, and that the appointment of priests be changed. He thought that American ecclesiastics should live for four years in the

oratory of San Felipe Neri. The fiscals believed that the intentions of Sandoval were good, but they judged his book to be a libel which, if published, would give a motive for the rivalries in the nation and for the criticism of the secular and ecclesiastical government of the Spaniards in America. They added that the abuses of the repartimientos and alcaldes mayores were already remedied, there were plenty of laws which dealt with the drunkenness of the Indians, and many dispatches had been sent to America relative to the appointment of priests; therefore the book was not needed or useful for anything, and ought not be printed because it gave little honor to the Spanish nation. Orders to that effect were issued, and requests were sent to the viceroy and archbishop of Mexico to collect all other copies of the manuscript which existed. Sandoval had sent a copy to his brother monk Gerónimo in the royal monastery of Valladolid in order that it might be presented to the marquis of Sonora; this document was sent to Spain with another copy.¹

In 1804 Viceroy Iturrigaray refused Gutiérrez de Rozas y Munive permission to publish a work refuting the ideas of Gregoyre, a citizen of Mexico, who had attacked the Inquisition, although the Holy Office and the archbishop approved of the paper and wanted it printed. The only excuse that the viceroy gave for this action was expressed in his decree of June 6, 1804, which declared that it was not convenient to publish in Mexico refutations of writings about which many people did not know. Munive then appealed to the king for the privilege of publishing the book, showing that Viceroy Azanza had permitted the publication of similar refutations with the approval of the Inquisition and no injuries had resulted. In spite of the fact that many people had not received information relative to the paper of Gregoyre, he thought that the knowledge of a seditious writing always spread rapidly and could corrupt all the in-

¹Expediente del Dr. Don Manuel Antonio Sandoval, abogado de los reales consejos, canonigo de la sta. iglesia metropolitana de la ciudad de Mexico, sobre que se le conceda licencia para la impresion de una obra que ha compuesto. Nov. 29, 1793, AGI, 1778 (91-6-13). Audiencia de Méjico. The three manuscripts of the book are in the *legajo* cited.

habitants if it was not checked at once. Experience had proved that perversity made its conquests secretly, therefore Munive maintained that the people should be warned before they learned about the paper in order that they might judge for themselves and resist the evil impressions. Various copies of Gregoyre's work were collected by the Inquisition and he believed that each one had many readers, consequently it was not possible for the viceroy to know whether many or few were infected.² The motive of the viceroy in not allowing the work to be published is not definitely known; perhaps it was because popular opinion in Mexico had commenced to turn against the Holy Office.

The lack of common ideas among all classes of people hindered real intellectual progress; each group had its own views and aspirations, which were frequently selfish. For instance, the *encomenderos* demanded that the Indians should remain in perpetual subordination to them, because this condition of semi-servitude suited their interests best, for they wanted to be the dominant class in society. On the other hand the clergy worked to release the aborigines from this bondage, and on many occasions the king declared that the natives were equal to his Spanish vassals. The soldiers had their own individual ideas; it was their mission to subject people assumed to be hostile and to cause the power of the Spanish crown to be respected. They did not develop ideas in common with those of other classes of society since they were transferred from one place to another and usually did not remain in America more than four or five years. They were among the first to disregard the ecclesiastics and develop a rational spirit, recognizing that they had to deal with events which originated in this world. The gachupín group in society had its own opinions which came to be quite different from the views of the creoles, mestizos, and other classes; thus there was nothing like the general public opinion that prevailed in the British colonies of North America.

²José María Gutiérrez de Rozas y Munive al ministro universal. Mexico, July 16, 1804, AGI, 1800 (91-7-10). Audiencia de Méjico.

Throughout the colonial period the culture of New Spain, a strict reproduction of the Spanish type with all its excellencies and refinements, steadily advanced. Enthusiasm for education arose from the first when humble schools were founded by the ecclesiastics who accompanied the conquerors. Those institutions developed into the colleges and universities, the greatest being the University of Mexico. For many years this renowned university, established in 1551 and patterned after the universities of Paris and Salamanca, exercised tremendous influence and gave the creoles more educational advantages than those which had been enjoyed by their parents. Thousands of students were enrolled and received degrees in that institution. Instruction, although dominated by religious influences, advanced extraordinarily in the seven Spanish-American universities founded before the close of the seventeenth century. This is truly remarkable when we realize that there were no schools in the territory which is now the United States until one hundred years later.

The Spaniards always considered Spain the center of European civilization, but their American-born children preferred to read French and English literature. Streams of liberal ideas poured into the country from France and British North America. Many young men who went to Europe to complete their education came into contact with crucial liberal ideas and were filled with the spirit of criticism, which was directed against venerable institutions and fields of endeavor. Needless to say, those scholars returned to America full of eagerness for French social philosophy and helped to spread the new learning among their countrymen. The Americans believed that culture made more rapid progress in the colonies than in Spain, and travelers frequently had the same opinion when they noticed that the New World cities of Havana, Lima, Quito, Santa Fé, Mexico City, and others were very similar to Old World cities in their customs, luxuries, and social tone.*

*Humboldt, I, 231.

Few European municipalities possessed more cultural and scientific institutions than Mexico City, which became quite a center of learning under the beneficent influences of Charles III. To the famous University of Mexico, and the colleges and schools already in existence were added, toward the end of the eighteenth century, the School of Mines and the Academy of Fine Arts. The beautiful building which exists to-day known as the School of Mines was constructed by Manuel Tolsa at a cost of 1,500,000 pesos. It was begun in 1797 and was not finished until the beginning of the nineteenth century. Distinguished wise men like Fausto Elhuyar and Andrés del Río, who were more than locally known authorities in the science of mining, were the directors of this school in its early years; the institution became distinguished, not only because of its great directors and advanced learning, but also on account of the number of noted men whom it very soon turned out.

The Academy of Fine Arts (San Carlos) was established in the same city by the direction of José de Gálvez, Minister of the Indies, during the reign of the great Charles III. The Spanish government protected it, granted it a spacious building, and liberally endowed it with a collection of plaster models and the most important works of the ancient sculptors—a collection which cost 40,000 pesos. Provisions were made for the upkeep and expenses of the Academy, which at the beginning of the nineteenth century were 24,500 pesos annually; of this amount the government contributed 12,000 pesos, the *consulado* or the organization of merchants 3,000, and the miners the rest. Every evening a multitude of young men from all social classes assembled in the school to devote themselves to drawing, sculpture, and painting, and many of them became well-accepted artists.⁴ The most remarkable thing about this institution was that instruction was free and in it Indian and mestizo pupils came in contact with the upper classes of society.⁵

⁴Riva Palacio, II, 892.

⁵Humboldt, I, 232-234.

The academy still exists, is open to the public on the same terms, and is actively patronized.

A few rather memorable works of art were produced in Mexico. José María Ibarra was called the Murillo of New Spain on account of the warmth and harmony of coloring in his "Jesus, in Simon's House," the "Samaritan," and other works. Mexican paintings are characterized by softness of outline, clear, harmonious colors, strong composition, and a spiritual glow on many faces. Miguel Cabrera, who died at the end of the eighteenth century, painted two great pictures representing the life of Ignacio de Loyola. This artist was under the protection of Archbishop Rubio y Salinas, the Jesuits, and the Dominicans, and for a time he was the director of an institution which gave instruction in painting. The bronze equestrian statue of Charles IV, made possible by the contributions of the corporations and wealthy men of Mexico City, is considered an excellent work of art. Manuel Tolsa took charge of the construction in general, but Salvador de la Vega directed the melting of the six hundred *quintales* of bronze used in the image. Fourteen months were spent in polishing the huge statue, which was set up in the chief plaza, May 29, 1803, and unveiled to the public on December 9, of the same year.⁶

In the eighteenth century the churrigueresque style of architecture replaced the buildings of plain façades covered with stucco relief of the sixteenth and the baroque of the seventeenth centuries. The new type of architecture was characterized by its decoration, the sculpture becoming an integral part of the structure. The buildings of the later days were often the work of native architects and they still bear witness to an excellent craftsmanship.⁷

After the reign of the wise Charles III, the Spanish monarchs continued to encourage and promote public instruction, placing New Spain almost on a level with the

⁶Riva Palacio, II, 892-893; Mary W. Williams, *The People and Politics of Latin America* (New York, 1930), 227.

⁷Sylvester Baxter, *Spanish Colonial Architecture in Mexico* (Boston, 1901), I, 23-42.

principal European nations. They employed large sums of money in the advancement of the natural sciences; botanical expeditions were sent to America, a Botanical Garden was established in Mexico City, and Professor Cervantes began to give courses in botany in that municipality. Baron von Humboldt eulogized the naturalist Moziño and the painter of plants and animals, Echavarría, both Mexicans, as worthy to occupy a prominent place among the learned men and artists of the world in his time.⁸

The development of scientific thinking followed the upward trend in Mexico. Members of the religious orders who went out into the wilds were stimulated by the new natural phenomena surrounding them, and they wrote many treatises on plant and animal life. More was achieved in the new philosophy, a name which was given to chemistry, in Mexico than in Spain, and mineralogy and geology were cultivated with great success in the School of Mines. A European traveler was surprised to find in the interior of the country toward the borders of California young Mexicans who reasoned about the decomposition of matter. The mineralogical work of Andrés del Rio, the best of its kind which Spanish literature possessed, was printed in New Spain. Three distinguished creole astronomers born in Mexico, Antonio León Gama, José Antonio Alzate, and Cárdenas y León, won recognition in their native country. The three made innumerable observations of eclipses of the sun and of the moon, studied the satellites of Jupiter, and determined the astronomical position of many places in New Spain. Cárdenas y León was also the most famous Mexican geometer after the epoch of Sigüenza y Góngora. He was noted for his great exactness; he it was who first noticed the errors of longitude in old maps; and he went to California to make an observation of the transit of Venus across the disc of the sun. So accurate was he that his work harmonized with that of Abbot Chap and the Spanish astronomers Doz and Medina. Antonio

⁸Riva Palacio, II, 893-894.

Alzate had less knowledge of the mathematical sciences, but he had a wider understanding of other branches; to this he owed, without doubt, his appointment of corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences of Paris.⁹

Humboldt gave due recognition to Spanish scientific achievement in the New World in his *Cosmos*, a book highly valued by Latin-American writers of to-day who like to collect evidence of the scientific contributions of the Spaniards in America to the fields of geography, cartography, and the physical sciences of their day.¹⁰ Much of the scientific work in Spanish America was largely observational and had to be verified by comparing it with achievements made in Europe, nevertheless some of it represented the contribution of men born and educated in America. Long before the nineteenth century Spanish-Americans had to be reckoned with by the scholar who desired to keep abreast of scientific thought.

Medical science was never highly advanced in New Spain, although many valuable medicinal plants were known and used. The cure of bodies was generally much less important than the cure of souls. Religious processions were held to effect cures and check epidemics, superstitious methods long held sway, and medicine men and quacks flourished. Of course there were always a few physicians of great skill and intelligence. An interesting measure, which showed a little medical improvement, was one in 1803 which prescribed that barbers must not perform the operation of bleeding without first being examined in their towns by the *proto-medicato* or board of physicians, because many injuries were caused by their inexperience. Formerly, since 1799, they only had to have the approval of that board for the performance of their work. The physicians expressed gratitude for the provision on account of the great benefits which

⁹Humboldt, *Ensayo político sobre Nueva España*, I, 235-242; Riva Palacio, II, 894.

¹⁰Alexander von Humboldt, *Cosmos* (London, 1864).

would result for the people and they suggested that it be applied also to apothecaries.¹¹

Literary writers of the eighteenth century, as a rule, did not surpass those of the seventeenth century, but a few names stand out above the rest. Father Diego José de Abad, the Jesuit, was considered by critics as the man in Mexico who knew the Latin language best and used it with the most perfection in his numerous writings. After the expulsion of his order from the New World he went to Ferrara, Italy, where he continued to write in Latin. Francisco Ruiz de León is noted for his poems written on American subjects, like *La conquista de Mexico* and others of similar nature. Father Castro wrote another *Conquista* and a description of the ruins of Mitla and Oaxaca. Fathers José Manuel Sartorio and Manuel de Navarrete were lyric poets of some importance. Among the historians of this century the creole Jesuits Francisco Javier Clavigero, Francisco Javier de Alegre, Andrés Cavo, and Mariano Veytia are outstanding. While there are some inaccuracies in their works, owing to their lack of knowledge of historical criticism, and the books are not quite as interesting as those written at the time of the conquest, the style is much improved.¹² They show that Spanish American authors could make contributions equal to the best of Jesuit scholarship.

Abad y Queipo, the bishop of Michoacán, must not be omitted in the annals of the latter eighteenth and early nineteenth century writers in Mexico, since the influence of his works was felt far and wide. The diversity of the subjects treated by this progressive and broad-minded ecclesiastic ranged from religious matters, like ecclesiastical immunities and the alienation of the possessions of pious foundations, to politics, military preparedness, agriculture,

¹¹Josef de Iturrigaray al ministro universal. Mexico, Dec. 27, 1805, num. 361, AGI, 1809 (91-7-19). Audiencia de Méjico.

¹²Riva Palacio, II, 894-895; Francisco Pimentel, *Historia crítica de la literatura y de las ciencias de México desde la conquista* (Mexico, 1885), 709; Luis Urbina, *La vida literaria de México* (Madrid, 1917), 17-135.

commerce, industrial improvements, revolution, and many other vital questions of the day. Queipo was therefore something of a philosopher, a political scientist, a reformer, and an economist besides being an ecclesiastic; his writings were read extensively because he was so well known in Mexico and later in Spain.

Some progress was also made in music; the first opera, "The Barber of Seville," was sung in Mexico in 1816, and soon two native operas appeared.¹³ In 1786 Mexico City had an orchestra of five kinds of instruments.¹⁴ Printing, which began in Mexico City more than one hundred years before it appeared in the English colonies to the north, survived in spite of the Inquisition, which permitted only certain kinds of books to be published. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the *Gazeta de México* and the *Diario de México* were the chief periodicals published, but they were not allowed to express radical opinions. For many years books had been collected in the convents of the principal cities and later those works were gathered into libraries. They were mostly religious writings, for the censorship by the Inquisition and the restrictions on importations caused many publications to have a religious tinge. Vigilant attempts were made by the qualifiers of the Holy Office to keep all profane books out of the colonies; consequently writings which entered Mexico were diligently examined and even some that had been permitted by the Supreme Office in Spain were excluded. This censorship was not confined entirely to literature, but was extended to works of art which might offend sensitive, modest, and reverential persons. Vessels were usually searched on their arrival for all prohibited articles.¹⁵

The narrow path of orthodoxy was difficult to maintain in New Spain. From the sixteenth century to the end of the colonial period the importation of prohibited books into

¹³Priestley, *The Mexican Nation*, 161-162.

¹⁴Williams, 221.

¹⁵Henry Charles Lea, *The Inquisition in the Spanish Dependencies* (New York, 1908), 264-266.

the colony went on in spite of the watchfulness of the Inquisition. One only needs to examine the many *legajos* containing bills of lading in the Archives of the Indies to realize the surprisingly large number of such works sent to America. Some of those books were seized and burned by the Inquisition, but for the great majority of them no records have been found of their having been destroyed or returned to Spain.

The young American-born Spaniard soon acquired an insatiable taste for forbidden books, especially for the writings of the French philosophers, which were smuggled into the country by many unusual methods. Those works were eagerly read even within the sacred and secret precincts of the cloister. The presbiter Juan Josef Guerra y Larrea, and his companions were accused of reading with delight the detestable French work *Le portier des Chartreux* and of not giving it to the Inquisition as they should have done.¹⁶ Some of the viceroys and governors of provinces imagined that they saw the germ of revolution in the French philosophic writings, but the means which they employed to suppress them only increased the discontent among the creoles. All printing was prohibited in some towns of forty or fifty thousand inhabitants; many disappointed citizens retired to the country and read in seclusion the forbidden works of Montesquieu and Rousseau.¹⁷ The secular mind began to crave intellectual nourishment which the dry writings of the church and the schools of Mexico could not furnish. The smuggled books were interesting and inspiring; they aroused a desire for reading and popularized many ideas previously unknown. The French and English introduced books freely into Mexico, paying little attention to the legal prohibition. Hence books became cheaper and were more in demand by the class that could read them.

Writings relative to the independence movement in the thirteen English colonies caused the Inquisition much

¹⁶Cayetano de la Peña á Antonio Porlier, Madrid, Oct. 4, 1788, AGI, 1153 (88-1-17). Audiencia de Méjico.

¹⁷Humboldt, *Ensayo político sobre Nueva España*, IV, 262.

anxiety. In spite of the vigilance of the administration the *Declaration of Rights* and the bases of the government of Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, North Carolina, and Massachusetts were published in Spanish and circulated in Mexico.¹⁸ Later José Antonio Rojas of New Orleans was discovered explaining to his countrymen the essential articles of the United States constitution, which he urged them to imitate. The Inquisition immediately put the ban on the pamphlets, under penalty of excommunication, and ordered that all the copies should be collected.¹⁹ The successful example of the United States under its republican government caught the imagination of the young creoles. They knew that Spain had helped the thirteen colonies to obtain their independence, and therefore they no longer thought it a crime to rebel against the mother country. They began to entertain aspirations to lead their countrymen to a similar undertaking, and this ambition was encouraged by citizens of the northern republic. The publication of American political documents in Spanish was intended to spread a knowledge of the principles of democracy of the United States.

Political thought began to develop at that time among the creoles, but it became vigorous and effective only with the opportunity for popular political action. The Spanish colonists were very immature in this phase of life, because, unlike the English colonists, they never had the necessity or the chance to govern themselves. There was some political thought in the Spanish dependencies; however it was found among men like Matienzo, Solórzano, Escalona, Calvo de la Torre, and León Pinelo, who drew their ideas largely from their practical administrative activity. They had enjoyed unusual advantages and had achieved successful careers, quite a contrast to the inhabitants in general, who had always been deprived of incentives to political thought on account of their exclusion from offices of the

¹⁸Francisco Molinos, "Declaraciones de los derechos del hombre en sociedad." Mexico, 1822. In *Papeles varios*, 140, num. 5, pp. 1-20.

¹⁹Alamán, I, 128.

state and from all participation in governmental affairs.²⁰ There was an utter lack of political training among the great mass of the people; this bore fruit for a considerable period after they had obtained independence, since their political thought was very vague and for years they had to experiment with putting into effect their visionary ideas. The wonder is that they got along as well as they did.

The French Revolution was a time of still greater activity for the Holy Office. Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man* was condemned for its seditious doctrines.²¹ The French *Declaration of the Rights of Man* also found its way to the Spanish American colonies and exerted much influence. A dutiful bishop ordered that none of the works of the dreadful French Revolution should be read in any of the colleges.²² It was considered dangerous to permit the people of Mexico to peruse the histories of the French Revolution because they shamefully attacked even Divinity itself, the power of the pope, the clergy, and the Holy Office.²³ On April 30, 1790, a French pamphlet, which contained eulogies of the work of the National Assembly, was found in Mexico by the bishop of Oaxaca; but Viceroy Revillagigedo declared that it was the only one of its kind which came through the mail at that time.²⁴ The same viceroy discovered some revolutionary medals which represented the liberty of France; one copper plate depicted the plebeians dominated by the nobility, another the destruction of the Bastille, a third a patriot, and others were the portraits of the king, Necker, Lafayette, and Bailly.²⁵ The careful Revillagigedo saw to it that there were no cafes in Mexico City where

²⁰Bernard Moses, *The Intellectual Background of the Revolution in South America, 1810-1824* (New York, 1926), 25-26.

²¹José Toribio Medina, *Historia del tribunal del santo oficio de la Inquisición en México* (Santiago de Chile, 1905), 438.

²²Gastón Desdévies du Désert, "L'église espagnole des Indes a la fin du XVIII^e siècle." In *Revue hispanique*, XXXIX, 248.

²³Medina, *op. cit.*, 443.

²⁴Viceroy to Antonio Valdés, Mexico, April 30, 1790, num. 115 reservada. Archivo General. BL.

²⁵Viceroy to Antonio Porlier. Mexico, Feb. 28, 1790, num. 124 reservada. Archivo General. BL.

the *Gazetas* could be read or idle persons assemble to discuss the news. He said that there were no foreign houses of importance used as meeting places, or other gatherings in which seeds of revolt were sown, since there was almost no society in Spanish homes.²⁶

It was not Frenchmen alone in New Spain who suffered because of their opinions; the Mexicans themselves did not dare to make known openly their liberal ideas. For example, José Antonio Rojas was denounced by two ladies with whom he had corresponded because of expressing his liberalism too freely. He was declared a heretic and materialist by the inquisitors, and in 1804 was condemned to remain in seclusion in the college of the *Propagande Fide* at Pachuca; however, he soon escaped to the United States, where he wrote a scathing article against the Holy Office. The renowned publicists, Juan Wenceslao Bosquera and José Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi, the latter known as "the Mexican Thinker," were also tried on account of their liberal and patriotic writings.²⁷ Blasphemous books and liberal ideas nevertheless continued to flow into New Spain, for the Inquisition had to issue many edicts against them. Such edicts were passed in 1790 and again in 1798; the last one mentioned as especially obnoxious *Les ruines, ou meditations sur les revolutions des empires* by Volney, a deputy of the National Assembly. The work was not to be read because of its maliciousness, atheism, naturalism, and materialism.²⁸ In 1801 another edict put the ban on general works, collected works, pamphlets, poems, and even harmless almanacs.²⁹ Again in 1804 an edict of the Holy Office condemned the writings of Corneille, Mably, Locke's *Essai philosophique concernant l'entendement humain* translated by Costé, and many other persons.³⁰

The utter foolishness and inconsistency of the Inquisition

²⁶Viceroy to Valdés, Mexico. Jan. 14, 1790, num. 111 reservada. Archivo General. BL.

²⁷Lea, *op. cit.*, 273.

²⁸Medina, *op. cit.*, 440; *Gazeta de Mexico*, IX, 9-11.

²⁹*Gazeta de Mexico*, X, 315; *suplemento* to the *Gazeta*, f. 321.

³⁰*Ibid.*, XII, 120, 129.

is shown in 1806 when Charles IV wanted a report relative to the boundary of the Louisiana Purchase. Melchor de Talamantes, who was ordered to make this report, found that he needed the works of Raynal and Robertson which were on the Index; therefore he applied to the Holy Office through the viceroy for permission to use the books. This was refused, but two qualifiers, José Paredo and José Pichardo, were commissioned to read the writings and submit to Talamantes such material on the subject under investigation as they might find.⁸¹

Frenchmen who lived in the country brought books with them and received letters from their friends in Europe, thus they helped to scatter new ideas. The administration tried diligently to get possession of those letters and censor the mails. The great Revillagigedo asked the Post Office officials of Mexico City to give him notice of all foreigners who received letters and where they lived, and if necessary he would apply the same care to other cities of New Spain.⁸² There were many Frenchmen in Mexico who carried on their trades; they were naturally partisans of the new order of things; and their influence was dreaded, since they spread their ideas among the people.⁸³ Because of the war between France and Spain the next viceroy was ordered to take more drastic measures against the French residents of the country; therefore in 1795 they were arrested and their possessions confiscated, but efforts were made to treat them kindly.⁸⁴ The political importance of the Inquisition as an agency of repression increased when the agitation in Mexico grew as a result of the abdication of Charles IV and the usurpation of Spain by Napoleon. That institution issued successive edicts on August 27, 1808, on April 28, June 16, and on September 28, 1809, directed against all proclamations and emissaries seeking to corrupt the loyalty

⁸¹Lea, *op. cit.*, 274.

⁸²Revillagigedo to Valdés, Jan. 14, 1790, num. 111. Archivo General. BL.

⁸³Medina, 395-399, 432.

⁸⁴Branciforte to Alcudia, Mexico, Feb. 15, 1795, num. 65 reservada. Archivo General. BL.

of the colonists in favor of the French political schemes; the political doctrine of popular sovereignty was denounced as a heresy.³⁵

Yet in spite of the greatest watchfulness of those in authority, French writings and revolutionary ideas kept eluding them and entering the viceroyalty. Among the charges made by the Inquisition against the liberator Hidalgo was that he read prohibited books, for example, the works of Cicero, Serres, Calmet, *El natal Alexandro*, *La historia eclesiástica* by Fleury in Italian, Molière, Racine, Demosthenes, Clavigero's, *Historia de America* in Italian, the abbot Andrés, *Historia de literatura*, and the writings of Rollin, Michaud, Bossuet, and Buffon.³⁶ He translated the tragedies of Racine and the comedies of Molière. He was accused of reading an Italian book on commerce by Genovesi, of praising highly the orations of Aeschines and Demosthenes, and the *Causes célèbres* by Pitaval; of being fond of debatable points in theology, on which he expressed opinions not wholly orthodox; of speaking of monarchs as tyrants; and of cherishing aspirations for liberty. He was reported to be well-read in current French literature and to have little respect for censorship—in short he was a French sympathizer.³⁷ Even men like Lucas Alamán and Bishop Abad y Queipo were prosecuted for reading prohibited books.³⁸ It was reported that the noble Queipo had a book entitled *Lettres à Eugénie* which was irreligious and a complete course in atheism.³⁹ The intellectual awakening was thus extended; it nourished the aspirations of the creoles, brought into clearer light the unreasonableness of Spanish policy, and paved the way for the independence movement.

Rivera Cambas, the historian, realized the need of edu-

³⁵Lea, *op. cit.*, 275.

³⁶Hernández y Dávalos, I, 150.

³⁷Lea, *op. cit.*, 276-277.

³⁸*Ibid.*, 274-275.

³⁹Carta de la Inquisición de Mexico de 11 de Mayo 1811. AGI, 2571 (96-4-26). Audiencia de Méjico; Consulta de la camara de Indias, Aug. 11, 1817, *ibid.*

cational reform at the end of the colonial era. He described the education of the whites in drab colors indeed, saying, "Not one free elementary school existed either in the capital or the provinces and the other institutions of learning were in charge of friars, almost always ignorant and cruel, while the girls' institutions were directed by women who inculcated superstitious beliefs by ridiculous narrations. Of real teaching a little reading and writing alone were furnished."⁴⁰ Yet at that time Mexico was not far behind other countries in education, since free elementary schools did not exist in the United States or any other European country. Literacy was unusual at the time in all countries, and the ignorance of the masses was a matter of indifference and even of satisfaction to government officers and to members of the privileged classes.

Far-sighted individuals began to desire the promotion of education even before the first insurrections had started and a continuous stream of petitions went to the proper authorities for that purpose. The people of Mérida in Yucatan sent to the king petitions in which they asked for the establishment of a university in their chief city. The sovereign agreed to the erection of a university in the seminary of San Ildefonso of Mérida and on May 6, 1778, a royal decree provided for a *junta* to draw up the statutes of the new institution according to those of the University of Mexico. The junta was held on February 28, 1791, and the statutes were made and sent to the Council of the Indies for its approval. There were not sufficient funds however for the university without burdening the Indian communities annually for its support.⁴¹ The college of lawyers of Mexico City requested the establishment of juntas and academies, in which better instruction and knowledge of all sciences and arts might be acquired. It set forth the great advantages that would result to the public and the state if

⁴⁰Manuel Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México* (Mexico, 1872-1873), I, 476.

⁴¹Benito Briz á Antonio Ventura de Taranco. Madrid, June 12, 1795, AGI, 1309 (89-1-7). Audiencia de Méjico; Informe de la contaduría general de 2 de Febrero de 1794, *ibid.*

there was an academy of theoretical and practical jurisprudence in the capital similar to that in Madrid. It was also thought well to have academies in the large cities where there were universities, since they would serve as places of disputation where young professors might obtain experience in defending and explaining cases in public. The king seemed to be favorably impressed with the representation because he sent word to the viceroy and judges of the *audiencia* in 1794 to have the constitution drawn up in accordance with that of the academy of San Isidro of Madrid.⁴² The matter was still under consideration in 1807, for the *audiencia* made a mistake and sent the statutes of the college of lawyers to Madrid instead of the constitution for the new institution; consequently the supreme court was told to submit the proper documents without delay for the royal approval.⁴³

In 1795 the inhabitants of little frontier Pensacola, which was still part of Mexico, asked for an elementary teacher to educate the youth of that locality, for after 1781 the town did not have any person to instruct the children until 1791, when Esteván de Baloria, a Capuchin priest, gathered them into his house in the mornings and afternoons. This good work lasted only until 1793, when the priest was relieved of his position and since that time there had been nobody to teach the children. Then the citizens requested the king to give them the same privilege as New Orleans, which had an elementary school teacher paid by the royal treasury. The Council of the Indies submitted the petition to the fiscal, who believed that it should be granted and the Council was of the same opinion; therefore it was decided to pay an elementary instructor for that town three hundred and fifty pesos from the treasury.⁴⁴

⁴²El rey al virrey de Nueva España, regente y oidores de la real audiencia de Méjico. Aranjuez, April 3, 1794, AGI, 1808 (91-7-18). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴³El rey á la audiencia de Mexico. Aranjuez, May 1, 1807, AGI, 1808 (91-7-18). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴⁴[Report of] Pedro Aparici del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, May 25, 1796, AGI, 1533 (145-7-12), Indiferente General de Nueva España.

Felix Cocom, cacique of the town of Timucaya of Yucatan, in a representation of May 1802, presented the need and desires of the district for an instructor to teach the Indian children to read and write the Castilian language and the first rudiments of Latin grammar. He noted the advantages that would result from this and proposed José María Rocafull as the most suitable person for the position, since he was a student in the college of San Ildefonso of Mérida, had all the qualities required for a good teacher, was of exemplary conduct, and had natural prudence and patience to explain Spanish and translate the Maya or Yucateca language, besides being the son of noble parents. Cocom asked that Rocafull be paid three hundred pesos annually from the community funds or from some other revenues which the king thought best. If after further investigation there was found to be real need of schools in the *partido* of Sierra and the town of Timucuya, it was decided by the Council of the Indies to found them, because the petition was in harmony with the laws to establish schools for Indians.⁴⁵

In 1803 Antonio de Argumedo pleaded for the education of the Indians and the poor of New Spain. He marveled that at the end of centuries few of the parish priests understood the native languages and the Indians did not know Spanish, although schools had been ordered established for that purpose. Many of them died without even confession or baptism. There is no doubt that the Indians opposed learning the language, but he thought that if governors and their *alcaldes* of such regions would consider the instruction of the *indigines* seriously, pay the teachers from the community funds, and take effective means to secure teachers when they were scarce, many of the evils of illiteracy would be remedied. Governors should compel parents to send their children to schools; in remote places the justices should see that they did this and that the poor children and orphans were aided. It grieved the good

⁴⁵Pedro Aparici, Informe de la contaduría de 6 de Octubre de 1803. AGI, 1798 (91-7-8). Audiencia de Méjico.

Argumedo very much to see so many orphaned children of unknown parents and poor children in the larger cities who were without the rudiments of education; like trees without cultivation they were of no use to anybody, even themselves. In their idleness they committed vices and ended in the presidios or on the gallows. In Mexico City alone there were from fifteen hundred to two thousand such children; therefore Argumedo recommended that the palace of Chapultepec should be used for their education, since it served no purpose. He advised that other children be sent to school there if they paid for their instruction; for the support of the poor children one-half per cent more could be paid in customs duties. He believed that the needy children taught in that institution would be useful to the state and the king in the careers of literature, arms, and of the navy. The junta of charity of the Chapultepec school should be composed of the viceroy, the archbishop, the regent of the audiencia, and the *corregidor* of the capital; a capable administrator appointed by the junta could serve for the members when they were busy with other matters and could give account to them of everything. Argumedo said he would not hesitate to put his own child in such a house, if he had one. The other cities could do the same thing with their orphan children and in that way fifteen or twenty thousand children would be educated annually.⁴⁰

The director of the botanical expedition of New Spain, Martín de Sesse, and the botanist, José Moziño, reported, in 1804, how bad was the medical instruction in the University of Mexico and what injuries arose on account of it. They proposed that chairs of mathematics, experimental physics, chemistry, and mineralogy, filled by learned professors, be established to aid the medical students; that there should be rigorous competition for the professorships of medicine, since the merits of the candidates could not be known by the old method of appointment; that candidates for the degree of bachelor be examined by all the

⁴⁰Antonio de Argumedo al consejo de Indias. Huejutla, Dec. 20, 1803, num. 36, AGI, 1790 (91-6-25). Audiencia de Méjico.

professors when they completed their four years' work; and that the chair of astrology be abolished because it was useless. Since the professors of medicine and the members of the protomedicato were not suitable persons for their profession and some were of advanced age, it was suggested that more capable men should be found, and the functions of the board of physicians be intrusted to an executive junta composed of professors.⁴⁷ The medical academy of Madrid thoroughly approved of the projected reform.⁴⁸ Then Juan Bautista de Arrechederreta, a citizen of Mexico City, asked for the creation of a general seminary of medicine and surgery in that city and offered to endow two chairs annually in the institution with six hundred pesos each as long as the king placed in them persons adapted to the interests of that city.⁴⁹

The bishop of Guadalajara, the public-spirited Juan Cruz, requested a school of drawing and architecture for his chief city, since it was so very necessary for the production of artisans. He solicited a teacher of ability in Mexico City, who promised to come to Guadalajara if he were paid one thousand pesos annually, which the prelate offered him. The bishop then wrote to the consulado and declared that it would be fitting if that organization would assign some pension to the instructor, because the amount he contributed was not sufficient to maintain the institution. The matter was considered in 1805 in a governmental junta, where it was decided to ask the king to establish in the consular house a public school for instruction in drawing and architecture, that six hundred pesos should be assigned to the teacher annually from the *avería* or convoy duty for

⁴⁷Consulta del consejo sobre representación del director de la expedición botánica de Nueva España Dn. Martin de Sesse, y el medico botánico Dn. José Moziño. Madrid, 12 de Agosto de 1804, AGI, 1155 (88-1-19). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴⁸Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, June 12, 1806, AGI, 1819 (92-1-5). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴⁹Juan Bautista de Arrechederreta al marqués de Caballero. Mexico, Aug. 8, 1807, *ibid.*

discharging the work of the consulado, and that the costs of the school for paper, articles for drawing, and other necessary utensils would be met in the same way, if the teacher instructed all who came to him gratuitously.⁵⁰

There were still more requests for educational reforms after the revolutions began, for in Mexico, as in other countries, a revolution is a progressive movement, since the people must at least know enough to revolt. Joaquín Maniau, a deputy from Vera Cruz to the Cortes of Cádiz, asked that public education be promoted in his city and in all New Spain, because it had been badly neglected for some time. He asserted that the primary schools for Indians, so much recommended by the laws of the Indies, in almost all the towns merely benefitted those who devoted themselves to the services of the altar, and in the higher schools pupils were only taught to read and write imperfectly. He thought that there should be other schools for other kinds of instruction. Maniau believed that religious schools ought to be preferred, therefore he gave a description of the school system established in Rome in 1597 and recommended it. He requested that the ecclesiastics, Anastasio Melero and Ramón Otero, be permitted to come to Mexico with credentials to teach in the schools, since they were both highly educated men and perfectly familiar with the Italian institutions of learning of their order. One man could reside in Mexico City and the other in Vera Cruz to inaugurate the new educational system and teach reading by means of the best methods, the principles of Christianity from one of the best Catechisms, Latin, oratory, poetry, philosophy, and theology. Although Melero and Otero wanted to go to Mexico very badly, they belonged to an order that did not exist in New Spain, and according to the laws of the Indies could not come; after considering the

⁵⁰El consulado solicita permiso para erigir una escuela gratuita de dibujo y arquitectura. . . . Guadalajara, Feb. 15, 1805, AGI, 2512 (96-2-18). Audiencia de Méjico.

matter carefully the Council of the Indies declared that the laws should be obeyed.⁵¹

On June 6, 1811, the criminal fiscal of the audiencia of Mexico reported to the king the unprogressive condition of the elementary schools in New Spain. He emphatically declared that the education of youth had not been attended to as it should have been, especially in the Indian towns. He cited the parish of Teanquistengo, the priest of which, Juan de Bustamante, had revealed the deplorable state of the elementary schools and the lack of attendance of the children. In the administration of the subdelegate, Pedro Lemos, one hundred and thirty-two children were instructed in the parish school, because of frequent visits and rewards given them, but under the later subdelegate scarcely three or four and during some weeks none came to school; thus Lucas José Cabrera, who was well qualified to teach, did not receive his salary. The fiscal requested that measures should be taken to oblige parents to send their children to school and to pay the salary of the instructor from community funds. He believed that the most efficient means should be employed to teach children of both sexes, and suggested that each child should plant a *quartilla* of maize in a square, the proceeds from which could be used to pay the teacher. More schools should be established in every partido in order to dispel the ignorance which afflicted the country so much. The good man thought that one of the causes of the insurrection was ignorance of religion on the part of such a great number of people, particularly the natives.⁵² Finally in 1816 a royal order reiterated the decrees of 1778, 1782, and 1815, which commanded the erection of schools in Indian towns where they did not exist, and urged that parents should be persuaded of the advantage of education for their

⁵¹Representación de Joaquín Maniau, diputado a las Cortes por Vera Cruz. Cádiz, Nov. 23, 1811, AGI, 1146 (88-1-9). Audiencia de Méjico; Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Cádiz, March 20, 1812, *ibid.*

⁵²El fiscal del crimen de la real audiencia de Mexico, y protector de naturales representa á V. M. sobre el mal estado de las escuelas de primeras letras en N. España. . . . June 6, 1811, AGI, 1903 (92-5-11). Audiencia de Méjico.

children, that teachers should be paid, that presidents of audiencias should provide for the appointment of capable instructors, and that prelates should aid education by means of parish priests, and urge the religious orders to offer their services.⁶³

Juan Nepomuceno Fuego, archdeacon of the cathedral church of Chiapas, sent a petition to the Council of State on November 25, 1812, in which he tried to show the utility that would result if the government would provide for the publication of a ministerial periodical entitled "Acts of the Government" and would allow the *Gazetas*, *cédulas*, and daily records of the Cortes to go to all the bishops, ayuntamientos, provincials of the religious order, superiors of convents, priests, and any one with the title of marquis, since this would increase the funds of the treasury through the revenues of the Post Office. The Council recognized that the publication would produce some good effects, for instance, the development of public spirit and a more rapid circulation of governmental measures, but the obstacles were too great because of the distance of the colonies from Spain, the expense, the ignorance of the people, and the difficulty of collecting the necessary data. It finally decided that such a periodical could be published only in a happy epoch after many other reforms had prepared the way for it.⁶⁴

In 1819 Viceroy Apodaca encouraged a subscription for elementary schools for both girls and boys in the capital; he subscribed forty pesos and many other people followed his example. Some attempts were being made at that time to educate the deaf, after one of them, Miguel Torres, a native of the city, was examined before the chief executive and a crowd of people. The viceroy said that Torres knew the Christian doctrine, reading, and writing very well and was a credit to his teacher, Professor Luis Chousal, who, he

⁶³Royal decree. Palacio, Nov. 14, 1816, AGI, 1903 (92-5-11). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁶⁴Consulta del consejo de estado en Cádiz á 13 de Marzo de 1813, AGI, 1821 (92-1-7). Audiencia de Méjico.

thought, deserved a favor from the king, such as the donation of some national or common lands of the capital, to aid him to maintain his family. The girls of Mexico City were under the instruction of María Vicenta Betancurt, a lady noted for her piety, and Apodaca suggested that medals should be given to American girls who were distinguished by their fidelity.⁶⁵

The same year Juan Bautista Arechederreta, the rector of the college of San Juan de Letrán of Mexico City, which grew out of one of the oldest institutions of learning founded seven years after the conquest, sought aid from the king on account of the wretched condition of its finances during the disturbances of the insurrections. The institution had always been maintained at the expense of the royal treasury, therefore the rector asked that a *grano* be levied for the school on each *arroba* of pulque introduced into the capital. He requested 4726 pesos immediately to pay the salaries of the teachers. Both the Council of the Indies and the king favored this petition and measures were taken to put it into effect.⁶⁶ The next year José Ignacio Paz declared that the apathy and neglect of education, which always existed in Mexico, were responsible for the ignorance in the country. When many wise people were asked where they obtained their education they answered that they had acquired it only by the powers with which nature endowed them and by their incessant study. Paz added that the education of youth had been very sterile since it was always directed by a vicious routine. He said that without education there could be no religion, no social order, and all would be complete confusion and anarchy.⁶⁷

There were still some old-timers who did not believe in

⁶⁵El conde del Venadito al Exmo. Señor ministro de la gobernación de ultramar. Mexico, Aug. 30, 1820, num. 58, AGI, 2657 (96-7-23). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁶⁶Consulta del consejo á 7 de Mayo de 1819. AGI, 1148 (88-1-11). Audiencia de Méjico; King to the viceroy of New Spain. Madrid, May 21, 1819, *ibid.*

⁶⁷José Ignacio Paz, "Carta sobre educación." In Suplemento al noticioso general número 724 del Viernes 18 de Agosto de 1820. AGI, 1675 (91-2-9). Audiencia de Méjico.

advanced education for Mexico. Bernardo de Pueido did not have much use for the sciences. He thought that New Spain had been faithful as long as learning was confined for the greater part to the cloisters, but he deemed that the new educational establishments produced the ferment which had broken out in the country. Pueido said that the young educated ecclesiastics, for whom there were not sufficient positions, complained loudly of the unsatisfactory conditions, barked like dogs without ceasing against the government, and sowed seeds of bitterness in all peaceful families, making them believe that there was no lack of positions for all. He was not quite so much opposed to the religious orders as to the colleges, because the youth educated in a religious order spent little, while he who was instructed in a college spent much and was a burden to his father who had to aid him financially for eight years, at the end of which time he retired to his town, where he perverted the simple with what he had learned in college and became the focus of insurrection. Pueido added that it could be said that the fidelity of New Spain decayed in proportion as literature and knowledge increased in the famous College of Mining. That institution had been erected to instruct young men in mineralogy, physics, chemistry, and mathematics in order that they might be used for the direction of the royal mines, but these studies had advanced little with that establishment. He believed that the multitude of youths who in twenty-six years came from that college injured the state for they aided the insurgents to make cannon, powder, and artillery, and they served as engineers for them.⁶⁸

Spanish American culture, a close representation of the European type, progressed and the colonial mind, which for so many years had unquestionably accepted the medieval viewpoint of the clergy, gradually changed. The growing interest of the American-born inhabitants of New Spain in the literature and liberalism of France, England, and later of the United States caused them to advance more rapidly

⁶⁸Bernardo de Pueido al secretario de estado y del despacho de gracia y justicia. Madrid, Oct. 14, 1815, AGI, 1155 (88-1-19). Audiencia de Méjico.

than their Spanish kinsmen, whose non-receptive minds adhered to the ideas of Spain on account of the privileges which they enjoyed. Just before the insurrectionary movements there was a noticeable demand for education in Mexico, which showed that some intellectual progress was being made in that country. The new society became conscious of a wide gulf between it and the old Spanish social classes; moreover the new group of people realized that its interests were opposed to those of the Spanish government and could be protected better if it obtained complete control of public affairs. The creoles thus became advocates of liberty and emancipation, while the Europeans continued to support Spain's traditional colonial policy. The ominous dissatisfaction of the creole-mestizo element increased until it bore fruit in the revolution which cast off the burdensome Spanish yoke.

III

ECONOMIC ASPECTS: COMMERCE

No part of the Spanish colonial system has been criticized so severely as the unprogressive economic policy of the mother country toward the American dependencies. True it was that other countries had similar mistaken economic ideas and upheld the false mercantilistic theories of the age, but no nation clung to them more tenaciously than Spain. In places where the pressure for a more liberal system was greatest, other nations winked at evasions of the laws, but Spain carried monopolistic exclusiveness to the extreme, and from the outset the policy of a closed door was maintained relative to colonial markets. The metropolis reserved for itself the furnishing of the colonies with articles of necessity, such as cloths, furniture, instruments of art, objects of luxury, and a large part of the food supplies consumed in America. Importations and exportations were made in Spanish ships and all American boats were prohibited from carrying the merchandise of the New World to Europe.¹ Foreigners were to have no part in American trade, which was to be the monopoly of the Spanish people; thus all commercial relations with the New World were subject to martinet supervision. A rigid system of registration was established to detect foreigners, and emigration to America was limited. Although the *Casa de Contratación* or India House, which had exemplified economic absolutism since 1503 was abolished in 1790, the Cádiz trade was still monopolistic. Other seacoast cities were deprived of a share of American commerce and were kept poor. Likewise in the colonies, before the liberal legis-

¹"Informe dado por el establecimiento de minería a la comisión de industria del congreso general." Mexico, 1836. In *Papeles varios*, 101, num. 6, p. 9.

lation of 1778, only two ports—Vera Cruz and Porto Bello—were favored ones that traded directly with Spain.

Commerce should have been as free as in the days of the Aztecs, but, under the strict monopoly established from the beginning, it could only be carried on by definite persons, in a determined quantity and form, and through certain ports. From such an illiberal basis arose all the legal complications of commerce between Spain and its dependencies. The introduction of more beasts of burden and vehicles for transportation needed by the Indians, and of new plants and seeds for food would have been great factors of mercantile progress. The monopoly was twofold, that which the houses of Seville and Cádiz, which made up the cargoes going to America, exercised, and that which the colonial merchants afterwards secured to keep prices up at their will. This was why prices were unusually high in Mexico and it was sometimes necessary for viceroys to interfere and fix them in favor of consumers. American commerce should at least have been free to all Spaniards, and Spanish industries should have been created or protected, but merchants could not send their goods to the New World without obtaining a special privilege for this and the cost of such a permit was very high. Inhabitants of the Canary Islands might not trade with America at all. Conditions were deplorable in Spain, industry was ruined, usury in all its forms existed, and the coinage was frequently debased. With such a situation, how could the colonies have a better fate? What was expected of them was that their gold and silver should pay for the foreign wars, make up all deficits in the treasury, and enrich individuals.²

Spaniards or foreigners controlled commerce almost entirely and creoles were excluded from its profits as they were from many other advantages in New Spain. The voice of an unknown writer declared that the depriving of the creoles in America of commerce was nothing else than to encourage foreigners in it. If foreigners obtained this

²Pablo Macedo, *Tres monografías* (Mexico, 1905), 12-23,

privilege then Spanish navigators became poor and were compelled to serve under them at a salary as servants; hence neither Spaniards nor those born in America would be able to carry on any commerce.³ The archbishop of Santo Domingo said that English merchants sometimes hepled the natives to make profit from cloth and other articles which they gave them to sell, and thus obtained a firmer hold on the island.⁴

Other countries soon tried to break down the cherished Spanish monopoly by illicit trade. The Spanish coasts were infested by the destructive raids of buccaneers and colonial officials appointed to administer the commercial system were corrupted. The monopoly finally collapsed, for under the best conditions it would have been difficult to continue, since it was contrary to all the normal operations of economic forces. A large part of the profits on American trade went to French and English factories because Spain could not supply more than one-tenth of the commodities consumed by its American colonists. Under the famous *asiento* of 1713 Great Britain obtained the right to send one ship a year to trade with the Spanish dependencies. England snapped its fingers at the treaty and needless to say, the ship never became empty, since it was accompanied by smaller boats which kept in hiding until night when they replenished the larger ship. From that time the maritime nation held an enviable position in American commerce. By 1740 it was said that England reaped as great profits from Spanish colonial trade as did Spain itself. Humboldt asserted that before 1765 England gained more than 20,000,000 pesos a year from fraudulent commerce.⁵

After 1763 it was impossible to keep the English out of Spanish American ports. British warships seemed to take special delight in entering important harbors like Havana,

³Parecer sobre el gobierno y comercio de las Indias. AGI, 141-6-4 (sin fecha sin firma). BL.

⁴El arzobispo de Santo Domingo sobre la conducta de los Ingleses en aquella isla. . . Sept. 11, 1796, num. 45, AGI, leg. 11, Estado, Santo Domingo. BL.

⁵*Ensayo político sobre Nueva España*, IV, 151-152.

Vera Cruz, and Porto Bello, not because of any profit to be derived from contraband trade and the love of law breaking, but it was hoped to build up a traditional right of entrance and it was necessary to ascertain the strength and location of the Spanish colonial forces. England also wanted to impress upon the Spanish mind the fact that its thirteen colonies were neighbors of Mexico. It was thought that Spanish governors were more likely to maintain proper relations with their neighbors if they could be held immediately responsible for their actions rather than through the long roundabout diplomatic path. The British warships were accused by the Spanish government "of being in a manner stationed in their ports for illicit purposes," of carrying out great quantities of silver, of aiding in the contraband activities of merchant vessels, and of giving encouragement to deserters from other vessels in the harbors and from the Irish regiments of the Spanish army. The great volume of illicit commerce was not carried on in the large harbors, but in the small and less effectively guarded ports.⁶

Spain's rivals could provide manufactured articles much cheaper than the Iberian Peninsula or its colonies could produce them. Spanish manufacturers had always been handicapped by the wealth of the Indies, since the huge gold supply that poured into the home country caused prices to rise and helped to ruin manufacturers on account of the cheaper foreign goods which flooded Spain. By the end of the eighteenth century the volume of Spanish production was almost nothing. After the Latin Americans found out the cheapness of foreign goods, Dutch, French, Portuguese, and English smugglers were welcomed and even the Spanish local officials pretended to overlook their activities. It was realized that goods which came through the legitimate channels were very expensive on account of high freight rates, delays in transportation, and the greed of merchants who often tried to make a fortune on the first cargo sent to

⁶Vera Lee Brown "Anglo-Spanish Relations in America in the Closing Years of the Colonial Era." *Hispanic American Historical Review*, Aug. 1922, pp. 378-379, 449-450.

Vera Cruz. The colonists therefore began to believe that the restrictive commercial laws which they were forced to obey sacrificed their well-being and they regarded foreign nations as their friends. Worst of all corruption and evasion of the laws became widespread, thereby lessening respect for the law, which in time became one of the weakest features of Spanish colonial administration.

Foreign importation was much greater than that of the Spanish metropolis, notwithstanding the insurmountable obstacles imposed and the short periods permitted to neutrals to trade with New Spain. The greater part of the import commerce in iron and cloths was in the hands of the English, owing to their industrial superiority and the concessions made to them at the peace of Utrecht. As a result British merchants established themselves at Vera Cruz, pretending to watch the traffic in slaves, which was not very important, but it served as a pretext to introduce other merchandise. They began to take possession of the foreign commerce of Mexico and soon obtained important commercial houses in that country. Later they disappeared and were replaced by French and German commercial establishments. The products brought by foreigners were mostly comestibles, cinnamon, and spices, which were very necessary, iron, and all kinds of fabrics. In fifteen years the value of the foreign imported cloth was \$45,800,000 while Spanish cloth only amounted to \$37,150,000 in the same period. The Spanish imports consisted principally of wines, iron, oil, cloth, linen articles, paper, and mercury; and the colonial imports at Vera Cruz were cacao, part of which was re-exported, and wax for consumption in the numerous religious festivals celebrated in New Spain.⁷

Commercial conditions kept getting more unsatisfactory because of the multitude of irksome imposts, duties, fees, charges, commissions, royalties, licenses, and tributes. An import and export duty, the *almojarifazgo*, was required on all merchandise. The usual rates were two and one-half

⁷Macedo, *op. cit.*, 35-36.

per cent on goods going out of the country and five per cent on imports, but this tax varied greatly under different administrations until it reached seventeen and one-half per cent. Goods which passed from one colonial port to another paid from one-half to five per cent duty.⁸

Besides all these there was the *avería*, intended to cover all transportation costs. It mounted to fourteen per cent at times, although the laws of the Indies provided that it was not to exceed twelve per cent. The *almirantazgo* was an import duty established as an endowment for the admiral of the Indies, Columbus and his descendants; but the right was given up in exchange for a pension of 23,437 pesos. From 1737 the duty was collected for the treasury on numerous merchandise and was continued until free trade; it was re-established by Charles IV in 1807.⁹ The *tonelada* or tonnage duty was levied on vessels engaged in American trade to defray the expenses of the consulado. At first it was one and one-half reales in silver for each ton, however another real was added later. The duty was not uniform on all vessels; it was graduated in accordance with the importance of the port to which a vessel was bound.¹⁰ The *alcabala*, which was ten per cent on merchandise arriving and sold in Spain and six per cent in the colonies, also affected commerce, for it was one of the most abused taxes. The régime of free commerce after 1778 modified some of the burdens of those impositions, but they were later re-established and prices were kept as high as ever in New Spain. Foreign products were still burdened thirty-six per cent of their value upon their arrival at Vera Cruz, and because of colonial imposts when they reached the consumers the duties were seventy-five per cent. The same thing happened in Europe with colonial products, for example, cochineal paid

⁸Solórzano, II, lib. 6, cap. 9, art. 8, p. 468; *Documentos inéditos . . . de Indias*, XIX, 81, 112; *ibid.*, XVIII, 337-339; Priestley, *José de Gálvez*, 361; Clarence H. Haring, *Trade and Navigation between Spain and the Indies in the Time of the Hapsburgs* (Cambridge, 1918), 84.

⁹Macedo, *op. cit.*, 27-29.

¹⁰Miguel Lerdo de Tejada, *Comercio exterior de México desde la conquista hasta hoy* (Mexico, 1853), 14.

41 pesos and 30 *centavos* on each arroba when it reached Spain.¹¹

The hated monopolies were extended to articles of common necessity like salt, fish, tobacco, quicksilver, leather, gunpowder, snow brought from the mountains for refrigeration, playing cards, stamped paper, alum, copper, lead, tin, alcohol, and cock-fighting.¹² All individuals were prohibited to trade in those products, since the profit from them belonged exclusively to the government. The evils of monopolies were increased by leasing them; usually the most powerful persons in the community became the contractors and worked for their own selfish interests to the disadvantage of the consumers. That which was not a legal monopoly was frequently made a monopoly by the clergy and merchants.¹³

The monopolies were generally accepted by the submissive people without question, but, when the noted tobacco monopoly was formed in 1765 and severe penalties were imposed on contrabandists, a small determined and enterprising group of men organized as a secret society to combat it. They had accomplices and friends in the tobacco growing districts and along the winding roads over which the product was transported; those bold defiers of the law battled even with the troops when this was necessary to defend their interests. But in spite of such opposition, the tobacco monopoly flourished, and contributed to the government from 1766 to 1790, after all expenses were deducted, 52,437,074 pesos.¹⁴ Contraband in tobacco also prospered, for as late as 1827, Laureano Morales complained that this illegal trade was hurting the country.¹⁵

¹¹Rafael Antúnez y Acevedo, *Memorias históricas sobre la legislación y gobierno del comercio de los Españoles con sus colonias en las Indias Occidentales* (Madrid, 1797), 23; Macedo, 29-30.

¹²Riva Palacio, II, 699, 701; *Documentos inéditos . . . de Indias*, VI, 254; *Memorias de los virreyes que han gobernado el Peru*, III, 275; Priestley, José de Gálvez, 153, 314, 321, 346.

¹³Macedo, *op. cit.*, 37.

¹⁴Riva Palacio, II, 890-891.

¹⁵Laureano Morales, Expediente sobre tobacco, Nov. 1827. In *Matamoras Archives*, vol. 7, pp. 26-27. BL.

Commerce in America was carried on through the consulado, established in the capitals of the viceroyalties with agents in the other principal cities. The organization had its own judicial tribunal, consisting of one prior with functions as president and two consuls who were the judges. Before this court was held practically every civil case arising from the trade of the Indies, such as bankruptcies and collection of debts. On the whole the consulado was similar to a modern Chamber of Commerce, and had a number of lesser functionaries like the assessors, the attorneys, the solicitor, the treasurer, the *alguacil* or bailiff, the *portero*, and the receiver.¹⁶ Those corporations of commerce were not to include foreigners or their sons or servants. They also had administrative functions which were somewhat confused with their judicial duties.¹⁷ The consulado, having large sums of money at its disposal, undertook to finance many public works. It rented the collection of the alcabalas, erected public buildings, customhouses, hospitals, opened roads, constructed wharves, built bridges, and gave funds for the great drainage canal of Huehuetoca. It also aided hospitals, charitable institutions, the religious communities, widows, and the poor.¹⁸ There was an inherent rivalry between the consulado of Mexico City and that of Vera Cruz which caused public profit. Each organization tried to surpass the other in the improvement of the services intrusted to it, as for instance, the parts of the road between the two cities assigned to its care.¹⁹ The consulado likewise worked for its own interests and soon became a closed corporation controlled by a few large commercial houses in Seville which enjoyed a monopoly of trade between Spain and America.²⁰

¹⁶*Recopilación*, leyes 2-3, 15, 21-24, tit. 46, lib. 8.

¹⁷Macedo, *op. cit.*, 25.

¹⁸Alamán, I, 59-60; *Documentos inéditos ó muy raros para la historia de Mexico* (Mexico, 1905-1911), VII, 89; *Instrucciones que los vireyes de Nueva España dejaron a sus sucesores*, art. 94, p. 22; Charles E. Chapman, *The Spanish Consulados of the Eighteenth Century* (M. A. thesis, Berkeley, 1909), 63-73.

¹⁹Macedo, *op. cit.*, 26.

²⁰Haring, 43-45, 136-137.

By the nineteenth century the consulados did not meet the needs of the American people, since adequate supplies of most of the necessities of life were habitually lacking in the Spanish colonies. This may have been caused by mal-administration, the inability of Spain to obtain goods from other countries, or by the deliberate restriction of the supply of merchandise by the consulado to keep prices high. The complaints made against the organization by the later viceroys of Mexico show that the institution was getting beyond their control. Viceroy Linares spoke of the many annoying irregularities in the conduct of the members of the body; he implied that its agents sometimes tried to undermine the influence of the viceroy at court. Those crafty men obtained monopolies of certain kinds of merchandise, hid their goods, or went into bankruptcy, and injured the common people by raising prices. Viceroy Marquina objected to the confused condition of the finances of the consulado and the independent spirit of the regiment of commerce which it maintained.²¹

The consulado of Vera Cruz asked the king for more privileges. It wanted the special protection of the sovereign and the same distinctions and prerogatives that the members of the ayuntamiento of that city enjoyed in cases of arrest on account of crimes which were committed.²² The same organization also requested that it be permitted to establish in that port a new society of commerce entitled the "Sons of Bustamante and Company." The Council of the Indies advised delay in the matter because the plans were very indefinite, therefore the petition was left pending, but the king was told to do as he liked about it.²³ The consulado of Mexico City wanted to expand its business and incidentally its power, consequently it asked to be allowed to place deputies in the towns of its jurisdiction and terri-

²¹*Instrucciones que los vireyes de Nueva España dejaron a sus sucesores*, 310-311, 195-196.

²²Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, Aug. 19, 1801, num. 11, AGI, 1140 (88-1-3). Audiencia de Méjico.

²³*Ibid.*, Madrid, Oct. 26, 1811, num. 21, AGI, 1146 (88-1-9). Audiencia de Méjico.

tory. It showed the great advantages that would result for commerce, since merchants would not have to come long distances over poor roads to the capital with their lawsuits and difficult problems.²⁴

Viceroy Branciforte thought of abolishing the consulados of Vera Cruz and Guadalajara because they had become so aggressive. That executive gave account to the king of the conduct of the former consulado which took charge, without the notification and approval of the superior government, of the construction of the bridge over the river Antigua and the road to Xalapa. He said that Revillagigedo, who had founded that body, was not well informed, and as a result it weakened the authority of the consulado of Mexico City and expressed a spirit of independence. Branciforte believed that it was expensive to maintain three consulados when the one in the capital was sufficient; therefore he advised that the organizations of Vera Cruz and Guadalajara should be abolished promptly and commercial deputations be established in the principal cities or capitals of the intendancies. Those commercial agents could then appeal to the tribunal of commerce in Mexico City. The consulado of Vera Cruz had recourse to the king and ably defended itself by outlining the advantages which were experienced from its erection. It declared that the *reglamento* of free commerce ordered that consulados be created in America, and that the older organizations of Lima, Mexico City, and Cádiz, in the space of two centuries, did not do as much for agriculture, industry, and commerce as the modern ones. The merchants of the seaport reminded the sovereign of the criticism of the great Revillagigedo in 1793 relative to the consulado of the capital. That viceroy had said that the body of merchants of Mexico City hindered progress because of its high maintenance costs, the large salaries of the prior, consuls, assessors, dependents, and agents which it kept at the royal court, without great benefits. He had even suggested its suppression and the

²⁴Consulta del condesjo de las Indias. Cádiz, Jan. 12, 1811, num. 17, AGI, *ibid.*

establishment of more consulados with better regulations, since the capital was too far from the coasts. The consulado of Vera Cruz did not want to be replaced by mere deputations, for appeals would have to go to the capital and there would be the same expenses and vexations as before. It asserted that the charges made by Branciforte that interminable lawsuits existed were not true. The consulado of the capital sided with the viceroy and said that two additional organizations were not necessary, since a large part of the country like Nueva Galicia and the *Provincias Internas* did not require them on account of their peculiar conditions; deputations which would be subordinate to the consulado of the capital would be sufficient for all commercial ventures. The body maintained that as in Mexico and America there was only one superior government, one supreme justice, and one ecclesiastical power, so there should be only one higher commercial authority.²⁵

Spain's restrictive commercial policy also prohibited coastwise trade between the ports of different vicerealties, and even between those of the same vicerealty. Occasionally viceroys like the two Revillagigedos continually used their influence to have the Mexican ports opened to domestic commerce, which was scant because of the irregularity and scarcity of the food crops and colonial exports.²⁶ Moreover this scarcity was also due to the failure of the administration to encourage the cultivation of cereal crops by liberal export privileges, and to the indolence of the natives under the paternalistic system of Spain. The hated alcabala tax was a hindrance to trade and the inconvenient means of transportation over poor roads helped to keep New Spain in a state of economic unprogressiveness. The trading privileges with immunity from the payment of duty enjoyed by officers of the royal navy caused merchants to be uncertain as to conditions of the markets and the profits from sales.²⁷

²⁵Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, April 2, 1808, num. 9, AGI, 1144 (88-1-7). Audiencia de Méjico.

²⁶Priestley, *José de Gálvez*, 202; *Instrucciones que los virreyes de Nueva España dejaron a sus sucesores*, art. 119, p. 26.

²⁷Priestley, *The Mexican Nation*, 193.

The monopoly system did not fulfill the great expectations of Spain; therefore it was decided to establish trading companies in imitation of those organizations of England, France, and Holland, which had helped those nations to advance so much commercially. In 1714 a kind of joint-stock company, under the marqués de Monte Sacro, was tried for the trade with Honduras and Caracas. The company sent out two vessels, one to Honduras and the other to Caracas, but the commercial venture was a dismal failure. The local officials and the audiencia were hostile to the company; the latter on the ground that the Council of the Indies had not passed on the powers of the organization, and the former probably believed that foreign smuggling might be stopped if the company succeeded.²⁸ Perhaps the most noted Spanish company was that of Guipúzcoa, founded in 1728 to take charge of the trade of Caracas because the efforts of the government to prevent illicit trade had failed, and to develop the resources of Venezuela. Six years later the company of Galicia was permitted to send annually two registered ships to Campeche, and if any merchandise was left, to sell it at Vera Cruz. Still other companies, like that of Honduras for the trade with Central America, that of Havana, Santo Domingo, Barcelona, Cumuná, Margarita, Escaray, Burgos, the Philippines, and two organizations for the transportation of negro slaves to America, were formed, but none of them ever proved successful.²⁹

In 1762 Bernardo Ward, a member of the royal council and minister of commerce, began to advocate free trade. He declared that if commerce were free and all who wished were permitted to go to the Indies, products would become cheap, merchandise would be brought for all kinds of purchasers, greater consumption would result, occupation would be provided for the king's vassals, industry would be

²⁸Rolland D. Hussey, "Antecedents of the Spanish Monopolistic Overseas Trading Companies (1624-1728)." In *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Feb., 1929, p. 23 et seq.

²⁹Haring, *op. cit.*, 138; Edward Gaylord Bourne, *Spain in America* (New York, cop. 1904), 295-296; Rafael Altamira y Crevea, *Historia de España y de la civilización española* (Barcelona, 1913-1914), IV, 297.

promoted, and the nation would be greatly enriched. He thought that many things from America were useful for Europe and many European products could be sold advantageously in the dependencies, but because of high freight dues and the bulk of the articles they were of little value so far. With free trade those obstacles would be overcome and a market could be found for the goods. The liberal minister said that products should be allowed to go out of any port of Spain to any colonial port at any time of the year; however it might be well on the return voyage for all ships of northern Spain to enter the port of Coruña or Santander and pay their dues there, and only Mediterranean vessels land at Cádiz. Of course all foreign goods sent from Spain should go out from Cádiz, since this would prevent contraband. The far-seeing man added that if the commerce of the Indies was not opened to all the vassals of the monarch, all the measures taken for the improvement of mining and industry would not benefit Spain but only serve to enrich its enemies.⁸⁰

The first real commercial reforms for the colonies came during the reign of the wise Bourbon king, Charles III, who abolished the most vexatious features of the government's monopolistic system. From 1768 there are evidences that the Spanish administration was trying to work out a more liberal commercial project. Decrees of that year which applied to Louisiana, Santo Domingo, Porto Rico, Margarita, and Trinidad permitted subjects both of the peninsula and of those possessions more extensive privileges than were accorded the other colonies. Trade could be carried on with Louisiana through the nine permissible ports of Spain and with other European countries provided the goods and the returns passed through one of the nine ports and paid a duty on importation and reexportation.⁸¹ By 1770 some foreign merchandise was allowed to enter

⁸⁰Bernardo Ward, *Proyecto económico en que se proponen varias providencias dirigidas á promover los intereses de España, con los medios y fondos necesarios para su plantificación* (Madrid, 1779), 278-283.

⁸¹Antúñez y Acevedo, *op. cit.*, 36-37.

the other dependencies, but this right was combatted incessantly by all the merchants of Spain and Mexico, whose profits were based on the rigorous prohibitive system.⁸²

By a decree of January 20, 1774, the king removed the prohibition to carry on commerce between the kingdoms of Peru, New Spain, Nueva Granada, and Guatemala. The natives and inhabitants might carry on commerce freely through the permissible ports of the South Sea where there were royal ministers and Spanish boats; viceroys and governors were to aid the construction of vessels for navigation of the South Sea. There were some limitations, however, in the decree, since the wines, brandies, vinegar, olive oil, olives, raisins, and almonds of Peru and Chile might not be sent to Mexico. On the other hand, gold and silver in money, copper, tin, and any other metals in bullion, the cacao of Guayaquil, Peruvian bark or quinine, balsams, herbs, and medicinal drugs might be transported to that country, through only the port of Acapulco. New Spain might convey to Peru, Santa Fé, and Guatemala its manufactures, fruits, and almost anything it produced, but not any goods of Castile brought in the fleets or any Philippine products. The import and export duties were not removed; two and one-half per cent had to be paid when the goods left the province and five per cent when it entered it, besides the dues of *armada* and the alcabala at the time of the sales.⁸³ A preliminary decree for free trade was first applied to the islands of Cuba, Santo Domingo, Porto Rico, Margarita, and Trinidad, also to Yucatan and Campeche, in 1775. They were relieved from many minor and oppressive dues and goods could be sent from or received in nine ports of Spain. Commerce might not be made with the products of Spain from one island to another since they had to be consumed in the island to which they were assigned. The inhabitants of one island might take what they produced to other islands if they paid the six per cent import duty; when this duty and the

⁸²Riva Palacio, II, 891.

⁸³Decree of Jan. 20, 1774. AGI, 1316 (89-1-14). Audiencia de Méjico.

alcabala were paid free commerce within the island was permitted.³⁴

In 1778 a period of restricted free trade was inaugurated, since the liberal-minded King Charles III thought that only free commerce among the Spanish-Americans and the European Spaniards could reestablish agriculture, industry, and the population to their ancient vigor. For ten years the chief import and export duties on Spanish commerce were removed or modified. For instance, the tonelada and almirantazgo dues were abolished, the avería was reduced one-half per cent on silver and gold, and the almojarifazgo was decreased, but was not uniform in the different ports.³⁵ Certain colonial products consumed in the metropolis were exempted entirely from dues. With special permission boats from the Balearic and Canary Islands might go to the Indies. Other Spanish cities besides Seville and Cádiz obtained the privilege to trade with the colonies, and free inter-colonial commerce was permitted. Goods still had to be brought directly from the ports of Spain and were transported only to Vera Cruz, not being allowed to go directly to Havana or other ports of Mexico.³⁶ Mer-

³⁴Decree of Nov. 8, 1775, and addition to it on July 5, 1775. AGI, 1316 (89-1-14). Audiencia de Méjico.

³⁵Antúñez y Acevedo, 176, 207, 227-229. Spanish goods which went to the ports of Havana, Cartagena, La Plata, Valparaiso, Concepción in Chile, Arica, Callao, and Guayaquil paid three per cent export duty in Spain and the same amount when they entered the colonies, however foreign goods had to pay seven per cent export and another seven per cent import duty. Spanish products sent to Porto Rico, Santo Domingo, Monte-Christi, Santiago de Cuba, Trinidad, Batabanó in Trinidad, Margarita, Campeche, Santo Tomás de Castilla, Omoa, Santa Marta, Rio de la Hacha, Porto Bello, and Chagres only paid one and one-half per cent export and import duty, and foreign goods four per cent. *Reglamento y aranceles reales para el comercio libre de España e Indias de 12 de Octubre de 1778*. Madrid, 1778, AGI, 1316 (89-1-14). Audiencia de Méjico, arts. 16-17, 22.

³⁶Alamán, I, 112; Macedo, 24. The Spanish ports opened in 1778 besides Seville and Cádiz were Málaga, Almería, Cartagena, Alicante, Alféquez de Tortosa, Barcelona, Santander, Gijón, Coruña, Palma in Majorca, and Tenerife in the Canary Islands. *Reglamento y aranceles reales para el comercio libre de España y Indias de 12 de Octubre de 1778*. Madrid, 1778, AGI, 1316 (89-1-14), Audiencia de Méjico, arts. 4, 43. In 1783 the port of Vigo was opened and in 1791 Grao in Valencia. Vera Cruz remained the favored Mexican port until about 1815, when the Spanish Cortes opened on the Gulf of Mexico the ports of Tlacotalpan, Matagorda, Matamoros, Soto la Marina, and Tampico, and on the Pacific, Acapulco, San Blas, and Mazatlan. This was the first blow struck at the mercantile monopoly enjoyed by Vera Cruz for three centuries. Lerdo de Tejada, 19-21.

chants of the interior cities who formerly went to the capital to obtain their European goods proceeded directly to Vera Cruz to buy it, and thus avoided a duty of six per cent payable on goods entering the metropolis.³⁷ Several other small expenses were likewise reduced and, since there were more buyers, the goods was sold more speedily. Goods was also imported in larger quantities and the prices were reduced considerably.³⁸ Vessels of foreign manufacture which the Spaniards had bought and those acquired within two years after 1778 might be used to navigate to the Indies, with the understanding that henceforth boats should be made in Spain. Wood and materials for construction were to be kept available for both Spaniards and Americans in order to encourage shipbuilding. Nevertheless, it is certain that foreign built vessels were used until 1791.³⁹ The owners of vessels of Spanish construction who carried national products entirely enjoyed a rebate of one-third of all the dues which they paid besides those granted to the products of Spain.⁴⁰ Merchant ships no longer sailed under convoy, but went out individually without naval protection. The last fleet came to Vera Cruz in January of 1778; it was under the command of Antonio de Ulloa, famous for his travels in Peru and for the secret information which he gave the king about Mexico and Peru.⁴¹

The decree of 1768 relative to Louisiana was reiterated in 1778, with some additions; this was to placate the French inhabitants of Louisiana and the French. As at the earlier date, there was to be direct commerce between Spain and Louisiana, that province was granted freedom from many minor dues, all persons were free to navigate to the dependency without obtaining a license, but with the

³⁷Humboldt, IV, 125.

³⁸John Pinkerton, *Modern Geography, A Description of the Empires, Kingdoms, States and Colonies, with the Oceans, Seas and Isles, in all Parts of the World* (London, 1807), III, 227.

³⁹Antúñez y Acevedo, 50-51; *Reglamento y aranceles reales para el comercio libre de España e Indias de 12 de Octubre de 1778*. Madrid, 1778, AGI, 1316 (89-1-14). Audiencia de Méjico, art. 2.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, art. 33.

⁴¹Alamán, I, 112.

obligation to inform the administrator of the customhouse of the port from which they started, the embarkations were to be made in boats of Spanish construction belonging to Spaniards or naturalized citizens, and the goods which entered Louisiana were free from duty, except an anchorage fee in the river or municipal impositions collected in the port. The products for the return cargo were to be those manufactured or raised in the province, they had to pay a duty of four per cent when they arrived at the authorized port of Spain, and if they were sent to a foreign country they did not have to pay dues when leaving Spain.⁴² Furs from Louisiana were to enter Spain free of duty for a period of ten years.⁴³ Although many of the old restrictions still remained for the protection of industry, commerce moved with much freedom under the new regulation.

The memorable Pragmatic of Free Commerce, after being tried in the least important colonies, was applied to all parts of Spanish America by 1789. The monopolies enjoyed by the consulado and great merchants were broken, and many small traders now entered the commercial field. Those who previously engaged in monopoly found it necessary to take up active work, accordingly they employed their capital in agriculture and mining, thereby causing those industries to increase.⁴⁴ The ayuntamiento of Vera Cruz declared that the population of the seaport had greatly increased due to free trade.⁴⁵ Industrious individuals and the general mass were enriched and the number of shops greatly increased.⁴⁶ José Pablo Valiente asserted that the valuable measure had given a powerful impulse to agriculture and national industry on account of the ease of consuming their products; it contributed effectively to

⁴²Real decreto que previene las reglas, y condiciones con que se puede hacer el comercio desde España a la provincia de Louisiana. El Prado, March 23, 1778, AGI, 1316 (89-1-14). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴³Reglamento y aranceles reales para el comercio libre de España e Indias de 12 de Octubre de 1778. Madrid, 1778, AGI, *ibid.*, art. 50.

⁴⁴Alamán, I, 112.

⁴⁵Consultas de negocios seculares. Mexico, 1807, AGI, 1143 (88-1-6). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴⁶Pinkerton, *op. cit.*, III, 226-227.

the increase and perfection of the merchant and naval marine; it facilitated communication with the metropolis; and multiplied productive capital. He added that the bonds between the colonies and the mother country were strengthened by those relations in such a manner that measures were communicated quickly and power was exercised in America with the same ease as near the throne.⁴⁷ Vicente Basarde said that the exclusive commerce which Cádiz enjoyed for so many years was injurious to the other provinces of Spain and it made cloth manufacture very unprogressive, but a new impulse was given to national industry with free commerce, which marked a glorious epoch in posterity; the year when the fleets were abolished should be set down in the annals of the noted events of the kingdom. Before the date of the famous commercial regulation business paid more attention to foreign commerce than to national and often carried it on with foreign capital, without exposing its own funds to risks, hence national manufacture was undeveloped.⁴⁸

A general era of prosperity began, industrial life was quickened, and there was relief for a short time from ruinous taxation. The people began to awaken and realize the limitations and grievances of which they had been the victims during the centuries of unreasonable discrimination and unjust restriction. There was a complete break with the ancient commercial régime and the inhabitants began to become conscious of their powers. Wealth and capital multiplied and the Mexicans made some advancement in civilization. Esteván de Antuñano thought that this was the first step toward Mexican emancipation.⁴⁹

The frontier provinces benefitted from the liberal measure. In 1782 trade with France and Louisiana was permitted to Spanish subjects, a necessary consequence after

⁴⁷Sobre sistema de gobierno de America. Sevilla, Sept. 16, 1809, AGI, 141-5-11. Audiencia de Méjico. BL.

⁴⁸Copia del memorial de Vicente Basarde. Vera Cruz, Jan. 5, 1779, AGI, 2508 (96-2-14). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴⁹"Discurso analítico de algunos puntos de moral y economía política de Méjico" . . . Puebla, 1834, In *Papeles varios*, 61, num. 3, p. 30.

the expulsion of British smugglers during the war of the American Revolution; for Spanish merchants and manufacturers had proved unable to supply the colony. Direct commerce with France was therefore legalized in order to compensate the colonists for the suppression of contraband trade and to remove all occasion for it. This concession to foreign commerce was not sufficient and in the same decade many others were made and still more demanded. Special permissions enabled American ships to do a profitable but somewhat irregular business at St. Augustine and New Orleans. British merchants were granted the right to take charge of the extensive Indian trade of the Floridas. They carried it on with their goods in English ships and never stopped at a Spanish port. In 1788 the coveted Mississippi River was opened to the Kentuckians as far south as New Orleans, and an extensive trade sprang up with that city. The commerce of the border was much interfered with in 1793 while the war between France and Spain lasted; consequently a new trade reglamento was made which remained until 1802.

Under all of these commercial regulations there was the persistent policy to prepare the border provinces for the older type of colonial life. In the meantime Louisiana and the Floridas as frontier regions required special treatment. Their function was to serve as a barrier against the economic and territorial aggressions of the Americans; hence the policy adopted was to promote the prosperity of the border colonies, guarantee their loyalty to the crown, and to make them as profitable as possible for Spain, gradually substituting Spanish for foreign commerce. For this purpose the immigration laws of Louisiana had been liberalized, and Protestantism was tolerated in order to induce Americans and other foreigners to settle there. This rather generous commercial policy for the border was a complete failure, because much gold and silver flowed out of Louisiana, the contraband trade continued, and Spaniards could not share in the prosperity of the provinces or compete with foreign commerce. The population of the

Floridas was largely of aliens and they naturally preferred the commodities of their native countries to those of Spain. British merchants were always patronized on account of the low prices of their goods. Finally dependence on the outside world caused a feeling of indifference for the Spanish monarch among the inhabitants of the frontier provinces.⁵⁰

According to Ramón de Casada free commerce was greatly to be desired, for it was the true means to make people happy, to cause agriculture, the arts, and navigation to flourish; it would increase the population, and banish idleness and vice. He thought that free commerce in comestibles would be a guarantee against the introduction of foreign products and at the same time the provinces would be benefitted. Foreign colonists, especially the Bostonians, had drawn 3,000,000 pesos from Havana by furnishing comestibles, when the money should have circulated in the Spanish dependencies themselves. It had been a cruel mistake not to let the abundant crops of Mexico be exported, for it was by that means that the prosperity of the English colonies reached a point little imagined. Nothing proved more beneficial to a country than the free circulation of grains and the exportation of the surplus which caused an active commerce. France adopted the wise and prudent policy which had made England prosperous. Economic writers and many far-seeing people in Spain always favored the freedom of commerce in grains and opposed foreign introduction, but for a long time they were not heeded. Finally Spain too abolished the fixed price of grains and granted freedom to vassals to buy and sell and carry on internal commerce without any restriction; as a result crops increased and grains began to circulate at good prices. Casada said that many hands were idle without blame and their work was pitifully hindered because their manufactures and products did not go out of

⁵⁰Arthur P. Whitaker, "The Commerce of Louisiana and the Floridas at the End of the Eighteenth Century." *Hispanic American Historical Review*, May 1928, pp. 192-199.

the country freely; therefore he thought the free commerce in grains of Mexico with Havana and the other Spanish colonies should be guaranteed. There were many laws in the past which permitted this but they had not been carried out; for instance, the transportation of grains for Vera Cruz was prohibited by means of mules and the *guías* (vouchers for export) were not allowed to be issued in the customhouse, which was the same thing as to forbid the commerce.⁶¹ Finally on August 21, 1782, it was decided by the Board of Finance of New Spain that all inhabitants might carry on commerce in wheat and flour and export it with entire freedom, without the payment of dues. They did not need to come to the superior government for license, but only had to subject themselves to the formalities of registering in Vera Cruz and the other authorized ports to avoid frauds. *Guías* for transportation were to be issued freely and the products might be conveyed to Vera Cruz on mules, *burros*, and carts. It was believed that benefits would result to the farmers, and territorial judges were to aid them as much as possible to increase the sowing of crops and to transport their products.⁶²

The consulado did not give up its old monopolistic privileges without a struggle. The consulado of Mexico declared that:

"Free commerce of the Americas with Europe and Asia hurts the public right, insults the prerogatives of the Spanish throne, destroys the pretensions, hopes, wealth, power, finance of the mother country, offends progress, customs, sentiments, and the peace of those possessions, and causes division and anarchy."

The organization said that Spain had a right to the com-

⁶¹Ramón de Casada, Copia del pedimento fiscal de 30 de Noviembre de 1781 sobre libre extracción de arinas y otros comestibles á la isla de la Havana y otras partes en que va inserta la requesta fiscal de 14 del mismo sobre dho. asunto. Num. 18, AGI, 2523 (96-3-8). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁶²Bando de Don Martín Mayorga. Mexico, Aug. 21, 1782, AGI, *ibid.*

merce of the Indies because it had conquered them, and that national monopoly was a just reward for the beneficent protection of the mother country. It added that if commerce were free all nations would wish to be situated in America; Spain would not have power to proceed against ten European states that tried to get possession of Spanish commerce and navigation of the Indies. According to the opinion of the consulado, free commerce was without doubt the most terrible enemy of navigation, agriculture, and manufacture.⁵³

Pedro del Paso y Troncoso, prior of the consulado of Vera Cruz, said that the consulado of Mexico City greatly exaggerated the danger of free commerce. He showed that the consulado of Cádiz had finally agreed to the necessity of permitting commerce in prohibited manufactures because of the contraband in them, but it always opposed the freedom of foreign commerce with the ports of America, and wanted to limit navigation to convoys sent from Cádiz. It was not possible for a vessel to come from the other ports every month; thus the organization was willing to return to the flotas or reestablish the galleons of the monopoly.⁵⁴ Troncoso stated that the consulado wrongly attributed the rebellion of the people to foreign commerce, for where it was most continuous there had not been discovered the lightest spark of that destructive flame which almost consumed the other parts reserved for the trade of the consulado. He thought that such corporations should not be heeded in matters of commerce because their members were prejudiced and they confused their own particular interests with the good of the state.⁵⁵

There were some persons who severely criticized the measure for free commerce; for instance, Antonio de San José Muro maintained that the poverty of America in-

⁵³"Informe del real consulado de México contra el comercio libre de América." In Hernández y Dávalos, II, 500-508.

⁵⁴*Diario del gobierno de la Habana*, Lunes 31 de Enero de 1820, num. 31, AGI, 1678 (91-2-12). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁵⁵*Diario del gobierno de la Habana*, Domingo 30 de Enero de 1820, num. 30, AGI, 1678 (91-2-12). Audiencia de Méjico.

creased with free commerce which was a true evil, that countries which had products to export were enriched but those which only worked mines became miserable, and that the old system kept more silver in the kingdom. Consequently he believed that it was necessary to restore conditions as they were under the old régime.⁶⁶ Perdo Moreno y Fauria said that Spanish products suffered greatly from the results of the unfortunate system of free commerce, commercial conditions were deplorable in Mexico, and Spain experienced incalculable losses because English goods were sold cheaper in New Spain than Spanish merchandise.⁶⁷

There was some complaint that, like so many other laws, the reglamento for free commerce was not enforced everywhere. Lucas de Gálvez, the intendant of Yucatan, asked for the free commerce of his province with the partido of Tabasco and the presidio of Carmen which were dependencies of the intendency under his charge. It seemed that Viceroy Flórez denied the extension of the useful provision to those places and ordered the governor to seize all goods from Spain, although they came registered with the permission of the intendant. Campeche also wanted to have free trade with Jamaica, London, and Bordeaux.⁶⁸ The intendant of Chiapas, Francisco Saavedra y Carvajal, requested the same thing for his province, since the governor of Tabasco would not permit free commercial communication between Tabasco, Campeche, and Chiapas by means of the Palenque River. When he was asked the reasons for his action, he declared that he was obeying the orders which he had received from the superior government. The commander at the presidio of Carmen manifested to Carvajal the extortions and abuses of the guards which the governor had placed along the transit from that

⁶⁶Proyecto del Antonio de San José Muro. Mexico, April 16, 1787, AGI, 1879 (92-4-3). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁶⁷Pedro Moreno y Fauria al Exmo. Señor D. Pedro López de Lerena. Mexico Nov. 26, 1789, AGI, 1907 (92-5-15). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁶⁸Lucas de Gálvez al Exmo. Señor Don Antonio Valdés y Bazan. Campeche, Sept. 25, 1788, num. 36, AGI, 2505 (96-2-11). Audiencia de Méjico.

fortress to the Palenque, hindering the conveyance not only of provincial products but also of the very necessary article salt. The intendant maintained that this was contrary to the measure granted by the king; the orders of the governor of Tabasco was the only thing to prevent freedom of commerce with that intendency.⁵⁹

Viceroy Revillagigedo showed that the wise measure for free commerce was violated. Although the commerce of European products with Mexico was prohibited to all ports except those of the peninsula, they came from Havana under the pretext of provisions for merchant boats and generals in the war. The inhabitants of Vera Cruz and the Spanish commissioners complained of the injury caused by the abuse, and measures were taken to remedy the repeated introductions from Havana.⁶⁰

Humboldt, who was familiar with the working of the reglamento of 1778 in Mexico, said that the word free commerce only represented an idea. Fourteen Spanish ports were opened at the same time to the commerce of America and this was like a step from the most despotic arbitrariness to a freedom sanctioned by law, but it did not go far enough. The noted explorer thought that more would have been gained on both sides if another order had annulled the oppressive customs duties, which were opposed to agricultural and industrial progress in New Spain.⁶¹

Pedro del Paso y Troncoso also criticized the Pragmatic of Free Commerce because it closed the ports of Havana, Campeche, San Blas, and all others of America to the trade of foreigners. He declared that to order the ports of America closed to foreign commerce, which was already established, was like requesting night to turn into day and was a waste of time. He said that anybody who knew the importance of the island of Cuba recognized how much

⁵⁹Francisco Saavedra y Carvajal al Exmo. Señor Dn. Antonio Valdés. Ciudad Real de Chiapa, June 4, 1788, num. 1, AGI, *ibid.*

⁶⁰Revillagigedo al Exmo. Señor D. Diego Gardoqui. Mexico, Nov. 30, 1793, num. 754, AGI, 2506 (96-2-12). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁶¹*Ensayo político sobre Nueva España*, IV, 122-123.

foreign commerce had benefitted it and how difficult it would be to check its trade. He maintained that the laws which regulated commerce should vary with the times. He believed that the increase of the permitted commerce would destroy the illicit which, besides converting useful men into delinquents, absorbed the greater part of the revenues of the crown and destroyed the happiness of the state and the prosperity of the vassals who observed the laws.⁶²

Other slight concessions were made to commerce later; in 1788 a decree permitted foreigners as well as Spaniards to carry on commerce in negro slaves in the American islands. The measure designated special ports where they might be introduced for a period of two years, and in 1791 this privilege was extended for another six years.⁶³ In 1789 national products and manufactures were declared free for New Spain and Caracas, and one-third of each cargo might be made up of foreign goods of licit commerce. There was also to be a rebate of ten per cent on national manufactures exported from Spain and another similar amount when they arrived in America.⁶⁴ The decree, however, was only declared to be temporary until the Council of the Indies might decide what was best for the promotion of commerce.⁶⁵ On account of the repeated petitions of merchants and in order to avoid the interruption of commerce with America during the French Revolution, in 1797 the king permitted all his subjects to make expeditions to America with goods that were not prohibited in national or foreign boats from the ports of neutral powers or from those of Spain. This measure did not have the desired effects, since Spaniards themselves abused the privilege granted them. Their enemies were aided to increase their industry and commerce, and to become stronger to

⁶²*Diario del gobierno de la Habana*, Domingo 30 de Enero de 1820, num. 30, AGI, 1678 (91-2-12). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁶³Antúñez y Acevedo, 145.

⁶⁴Decree of Feb. 28, 1789. AGI, 1316 (89-1-14). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁶⁵Informe de la contaduría general de 18 de Marzo de 1789, y repuesta de los señores fiscales de 7 de Abril siguiente. *Ibid.*

continue the war; therefore the sovereign annulled the decree of 1797 by another one of 1799.⁶⁶

The king also permitted European goods to circulate from port to port in America because of the scarcity of such articles during the war with England, but in 1809 and 1810 the consulado of Vera Cruz complained about the injuries caused to national trade because of the measure, especially when the governor of Cuba opened the ports of that island to foreign vessels which came with cargoes of all kinds of European products. Consequently the value of European imports went up in the three years preceding 1810 to 2,671,607 pesos and the organization inferred that the larger part of it came from foreign colonies; the foreigner was aided and the royal treasury was deprived of its dues.⁶⁷ The consulado of Havana, which was benefitted by the provision, related a different story, asking that the privilege should be continued because of the good received from it.⁶⁸

Before 1815 a number of other Mexican ports besides Vera Cruz had been opened directly to European commerce. José María Quirós, secretary of the consulado of Vera Cruz, said that the authorized ports were of three classes—some were necessary, others useless, and the rest were injurious. All those mentioned in the reglamento of free commerce of 1778 which occupied strategic or important places in the viceroyalty and captaincies-general were truly useful on account of the great amount of business carried on in them. In the class of useless ports could be placed San Bernardo in New Mexico on a coast little known and in a deplorable place where there was not a

⁶⁶Decree of 1799. Aranjuez, April 1799, AGI, 1314 (89-1-12). Audiencia de Méjico; Varias cartas sobre pago del situado del ministro Español en Filadelfia 1799. *Ibid.*, papeleta 75.

⁶⁷El consulado de Vera Cruz da cuenta a V. E. en el intolerable abuso que se hace en las reales ordenes que permiten la exportación de efectos de Europa de un puerto a otro de America . . . Vera Cruz, June 6, 1810, num. 360, AGI, 2514 (96-2-20). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁶⁸El consulado de Havana pide que ratifique las reales ordenes que permiten la reexportación de efectos procedentes de la península para otros puertos de America . . . Havana, Nov. 5, 1810, num. 360, AGI, *ibid.*

sufficient number of treasury officials and it only served as a smuggling center. Another useless port was Guaymas on the desert coast of Sonora on the South Sea to which not even Spanish vessels ever came, and no others landed there except two foreign ones, because of the difficulty of rounding Cape Horn. The same thing was true of the ports in Lower and Upper California, since their direct commerce with Spain was almost impossible. Quirós maintained that almost all the smaller permissible ports along the long extent of the South Sea were injurious to commerce. Only one expedition came from Spain to San Blas, for the voyage was dangerous and unprofitable. He agreed with the officials of South America, who declared that the foreign goods which would enter those ports would ruin commerce; therefore he believed that they should be closed and that the royal orders, which permitted the reexportation of European products from one American port to another, should be annulled because of the frauds destructive to industry and commerce.⁶⁹ By 1818 the king was practically forced to permit the freedom of foreign commerce with the ports of New Spain, and he excepted only those articles which might injure the national industry.⁷⁰

The reforms did not stop smuggling—the curse of the Spanish commercial system. From 1796 to 1801 during the war with England, Spain could not introduce into Mexico more than 2,604,000 pesos' worth of goods; yet all the shops of New Spain were full of muslins from India and the products of English manufacture. In 1798 Viceroy Azanza said that not more than nineteen boats and some small barks could escape the British and arrive in Vera Cruz. Nor could the products of the country go out

⁶⁹Memoria de ynstituto en que se demuestra, que los muchos puertos nuevamente habitados en America, y el giro que se está haciendo por los de la mar del sur procedente de colonias extrangeras, arruina su industria y agricultura, y la navegación y comercio de España . . . Vera Cruz, Dec. 24, 1815, AGI, 2517 (96-3-21). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁷⁰*Diario del gobierno de la Habana*, Lunes 31 de Enero de 1820, num. 31, AGI 1678 (91-2-12). Audiencia de Méjico. In 1816 there entered the port of Havana 1008 boats, but only 336 of them were Spanish.

of that port; at that time there were more than eight thousand bags of grain waiting for transportation. Azanza advised commerce with the United States so that vessels of the northern nation might take Mexican products to Havana, but the merchants of Cádiz resented such a measure for fear that their monopoly would be taken away when peace was restored. Every year for half a century the Minister of the Indies asked the viceroys, the Board of Finance, and the intendants for information concerning means to decrease the contraband trade. In spite of the multitude of coast guards and the severity of the penal code, illicit trade continued while legal profit diminished.⁷¹

Clandestine trade flourished on the Guadalquivir itself and it was frequently necessary to issue decrees against it and to mention the penalties for breaking the rules. This commerce always increased in proportion to the number and rigor of the prohibitions against it, since the many formalities and red tape gave the smugglers a chance to violate the laws. Álvarez Osorio said that in the last half of the seventeenth century illicit trade at Seville amounted to 10,000,000 pesos a year.⁷² Josef de Santa Gertrudis y Cárdenas declared that contraband was very frequent even among persons of first distinction, that the greater part of commerce was clandestine, and that correspondence was maintained with foreign nations which sent spies into the colonial ports with great danger to their security. He argued that one of the roots of the evil was that smuggling was not believed to be a sin, another that it was not harmful, another that the royal dues were unjust and that the people were burdened with excessive imposts.⁷³ Spanish governors in the ports often tolerated or even encouraged the contraband trade on the pretext that the colonists could not get along without it. They not only accepted bribes

⁷¹Humboldt, IV, 120-121; Alamán, I, 142-143.

⁷²Haring, *op. cit.*, 62-63, 67.

⁷³Fray Josef de Santa Gertrudis y Cárdenas á Floridablanca. Puebla, Oct. 28, 1787, AGI, 1879 (92-4-3). Audiencia de Méjico.

but engaged in the buying and selling of articles of commerce.

In 1803 Antonio de Argumedo said that the restriction of commerce caused contraband and that many persons became contrabandists involuntarily. When a boat came from some port of Spain, the captain or owner of the merchandise which was embarked presented his customs permit, the register was formed and closed immediately, and provision was not made for embarkation in cases of emergency. Then the owner and the captain bought some things and bribed the customs guards in order to be able to take them on board and not suffer the costs of a new opening of the register and its delay. Others embarked articles without register because they did not have money with which to pay those dues. He thought that there should be greater care with the exportation from American ports for those of Spain on account of the silver and precious products which were shipped without register. Much involuntary smuggling occurred also with the products which came from the islands or from one American port to another. Argumedo believed that the unsatisfactory condition would be remedied if the registry were free and if it could be opened to place on it new articles for transportation, and every captain, mate, or owner of a vessel should be classified as a dependent of the treasury concerning the contraband which his boat contained. Before arriving at a port the captain should tell those who brought some articles to sell that they had to present them or a memorandum in order that, as soon as the revenue boat came, he might show the invoice of the goods not registered and they might pass to the customhouse where they could pay the dues of extraction which should have been paid in the Spanish ports. The same procedure should be carried out with boats that went from America to Spain, for they too had contraband on board. He advised that every merchant on land or sea should have exact instructions so that he could know the dues of each thing, which ones were exempt from duties, and the exactors should

have the same rules to prevent mistakes; the same penalties should be inflicted on the merchant who defrauded the royal rights and the exactor who collected badly and caused evil treatment or injustice. Argumedo declared that the limitation of navigation from Spanish port to Spanish port, the hindering of the embarkation of products of the colonies and of merchandise which paid just dues, and the prohibition to give guías of merchandise by land were very harmful to the nation and the treasury, since such restrictions caused contraband; they gave a motive for the greatest disorders, and when not able to export their products many individuals abandoned them. He said that if the marqués de Santa Clara, who was governor of Havana, did not grant permission to the Anglo-Americans to introduce their products into that city, he might as well hand the island over to the English, for that would happen without doubt by scrupulously fulfilling the royal orders. The rigorous restriction of commerce from one port to another was contrary to reason. Arnedo inferred that the collection of two dues, one in Vera Cruz and another in Tuxpam or Tampico, was injurious. Although the astute Viceroy Revillagigedo on March 29, 1789, freed that province from all dues, they were still collected. Argumedo added that commerce in America was the thing that truly increased the funds of the treasury, aided the promotion of agriculture and the arts, and contributed to emergencies and pious works, all of which suffered because of the decadence of Spanish commerce on account of the restrictions, the increase of dues, and contraband.⁷⁴

Smuggling was very profitable in Vera Cruz, although there was a customhouse with many officials in that city. In 1803 Viceroy Marquina said that he believed there was a direct correspondence carried on between the Spaniards of Mexico and the English traders of Jamaica.⁷⁵ From

⁷⁴Antonio de Argumedo al consejo de Indias. Huejutla, Dec. 20, 1803, num. 36, AGI, 1790 (91-6-25). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁷⁵*Instrucciones que los vireyes de Nueva España dejaron a sus sucesores*, 205-206.

that Mecca of contrabandists streams of illicit commerce rolled over the shores of Spanish America, defying Spain's monopoly. The English contraband flowed in two great streams; one followed the course of the South Sea Company's legitimate trade, and the other represented the multifarious activities of private traders. During the wars with Spain, English trade relapsed wholly into the hands of private traders, who considered the wars a signal to exert every effort to strengthen their foothold in less conspicuous places. The Jamaica smugglers kept their commercial factors in the villages of the Mosquito Indians, on the Costa del Norte, and along the Belize River. This latter district was the center of the logwood cutting industry and the Spanish authorities feared lest it would be used as a base for the commercial penetration of southern New Spain. English contrabandists swarmed also in the region of the Rio Tabasco and Campeche.

When England obtained Florida and the right to navigate the Mississippi on equal terms with Spain, still more fruitful sources for illicit trade arose. The first English governor of Florida realized this when he wrote to the Board of Trade,

"Situated as this colony is, nothing but downright folly can prevent a very extensive commerce . . . Now that New Orleans is ceded to Spain it must serve as a means to introduce our commodities to the Spanish dominions without a rival and so in a manner deliver to us the key of the wealth of Mexico."

Very soon England's dream began to be realized; British merchants resided openly at New Orleans and ships on the Mississippi traded with the inhabitants on the Spanish side of the river. At times this was checked, but it only reappeared later.⁷⁸ Only occasionally could the Spanish gov-

⁷⁸Vera Lee Brown, "Contraband Trade: a Factor in the Decline of Spain's Empire in America." *Hispanic American Historical Review*, May 1928, p. 178, et seq.

ernment secure sufficiently clear proof of smuggling to attract the attention of the British ministry, which realized that Spain did not have military forces large enough to compel respect for its system of exclusiveness maintained in such vast dominions.

The Manila galleons likewise brought to Mexico large quantities of contraband goods. According to law, those boats were not to carry more than 500,000 pesos' worth of goods, but they generally contained 1,500,000 or 2,000,000 pesos' worth.⁷⁷ The command of the galleons was a most coveted office. It was sometimes worth 40,000 pesos obtained from commissions, tickets, and gifts from merchants, although legally the officers of the vessels were forbidden to have any share in the trade. The pilot cleared 20,000 pesos and the mates 9,000 pesos each.⁷⁸ In 1790 some valuable jewels, which consisted of diamonds, pearls, and other precious stones, were detected at Acapulco. The jewels were brought from Manila by Antonio Sáenz and were landed in the western port without register. The viceroy had them sent to the chief treasury and Sáenz appealed to the king saying that they were not his but a gift for Mexico, although he did not know from whom. A gentleman of Manila, Diego García Herrera, had intrusted them to him and he was told that in Acapulco certain persons would ask for them. The matter was taken to the Council of the Indies which approved the confiscation of the precious stones by the viceroy, but that body recommended to the king the good conduct of Sáenz because he could have hidden the jewels if he had wished.⁷⁹

Many captains of vessels found pretexts to land on the western coast of New Spain, saying that they had been driven there by storms. Sometimes only a few hours were sufficient to unload and take on board large cargoes of contraband. In 1799 a notable case of this kind occurred

⁷⁷Humboldt, IV, 99.

⁷⁸Haring, *op. cit.*, 148.

⁷⁹Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, Jan. 27, 1798, AGI, 1139 (88-1-2). Audiencia de Méjico.

when a frigate named *Nuestra Señora del Pilar* was sent to aid the Manila galleon, but it returned before the galleon. The crew declared that it was obliged to do this because of a tempest; after the vessel landed at San Blas, over 200,000 pesos' worth of smuggled goods were sold.⁸⁰

At the time of Humboldt's visit to Mexico the customs duties on foreign imported goods had increased from thirty-five to forty per cent; therefore it was impossible for honest merchants to make much profit on such articles. Illicit trade flourished especially in time of war; then commerce almost reached the point of being independent. At that time illegal trade was estimated at six or seven million pesos a year, and in periods of peace at four or five million pesos.⁸¹ The keen Abad Queipo calculated the contributions of New Spain to the commerce of other nations at 29,000,000 pesos annually, but this included both legal and illegal trade.⁸² Spanish merchants could not compete successfully with foreigners under such conditions, since the prices of their goods had to be very high on account of the dangers and difficulties of transportation, because of the large securities demanded, illiberal contracts, and the contributions and loans to help meet the expenses of the war. As a result many merchants were ruined and the contrabandists had everything their own way, for the government of New Spain could not guard the immense extent of the coasts while there were wars.⁸³

Sometimes, owing to lack of communication caused by war, Spain had to permit products to be sent from neutral ports directly to America.⁸⁴ During the American Revolution, French and American vessels were frequently granted special privileges in Spanish and colonial ports. Many of

⁸⁰Humboldt, III, 91-92; *Instrucciones que los virreyes de Nueva España dejaron a sus sucesores*, arts. 349-350, p. 210.

⁸¹Humboldt, IV, 120-121.

⁸²"Representación á nombre de los labradores y comerciantes de Michoacán." Valladolid, Oct. 24, 1805. *In* Mora, I, 95.

⁸³Riva Palacio, II, 891. The great bulk of the legajos of the Archivo General de Indias from about 1780 to 1806 deal with smuggling.

⁸⁴Macedo, *op. cit.*, 24-25.

those ships stopped at Havana to obtain water and supplies.⁸⁵ Occasionally some of those boats in distress which received hospitality were English.⁸⁶ A Dutch boat, *Los Tres Amigos*, which lost its way to Florida also found refuge at Havana in July 1777.⁸⁷ Some trade was carried on with those vessels; for example, on October 19, 1777, the governor of Havana aided an Anglo-American sloop *El Francisco* loaded with rice for the small Windward Islands. It had encountered bad weather on its voyage and needed repairs; therefore it was allowed to sell part of its cargo to meet the expenses.⁸⁸ Again on June 11, 1778, the vessel *San Antonio* from North Carolina commanded by Juan Villon arrived at Havana full of rice, which it sold and then returned to Carolina laden with sugar.⁸⁹ On December 16, 1778, two American ships from South Carolina came to the Cuban port, obtained 751 pesos' worth of supplies and paid for them with a quantity of rice which they were permitted to sell.⁹⁰ Once more on February 12, 1779, an English schooner was given permission to sell some whisky at Havana to pay for repairs.⁹¹ During the French Revolution neutrals again acquired more commercial privileges in Spanish America. Viceroy Branciforte protested because the count of Monpox obtained the right to transport whisky to the Anglo-American colonies and bring back flour to Cuba, because he feared

⁸⁵Diego Jph. Navarro á José de Gálvez. Havana, April 20, 1776, June 15, 1777, May 29, 1778, April 12, 1779, numeros 242, 3, 262, 478, AGI, 80-1-3. Audiencia de Santo Domingo. BL. Marqués de la Torre á José de Gálvez. Havana, May 8, 1777, num. 1442, *ibid.* BL.

⁸⁶Diego Jph. Navarro á José de Gálvez. Havana, Aug. 12, 1778, num. 320, AGI, 80-1-3. Audiencia de Santo Domingo. BL.

⁸⁷*Ibid.*, July 27, 1777, num. 40, AGI, 80-1-3. Audiencia de Santo Domingo. BL.

⁸⁸Diego Jph. Navarro á José de Gálvez. Havana, Oct. 19, 1777, num. 99, *ibid.* BL.

⁸⁹Juan Ignacio de Urriza á José de Gálvez. Havana, June 11, 1778, num. 3 reservada, AGI, 81-4-36. Audiencia de Santo Domingo. BL.

⁹⁰Diego Jph. Navarro á José de Gálvez. Havana, Dec. 16, 1778, num. 394, AGI, 80-1-3. Audiencia de Santo Domingo. BL.

⁹¹*Ibid.*, Feb. 12, 1779, num. 427, AGI, 80-1-3. Audiencia de Santo Domingo. BL.

that this would injure the inhabitants of his dominion.⁹²

Internal commerce became more progressive when free trade was established. Products were exchanged quite freely, especially with the mining regions. Every week thousands of mules came from Chihuahua and Durango to Mexico City bringing silver, leather, and other commodities from those districts. They returned laden with manufactured woolen goods from Puebla and Querétaro, also with merchandise from Europe and the Philippines, and with iron and mercury. The transportation of maize promoted interior commerce as much as the grains from Europe. It was one of the most important articles of trade in the provinces of Guadalajara, Valladolid, Guanajuato, Mexico, San Luis Potosí, Vera Cruz, Puebla, and Oaxaca. Better and cheaper transportation was one of the problems that had to be met before internal commerce could be profitable. It seems that this was lacking in the intendancy of Puebla; therefore the progress of industry was slow, in spite of the active zeal of the intendant, Manuel Flon, the count of Cadena. Commerce in flour had decayed because of the enormous cost of transportation from Mexico to Havana; also the trade in hats and glazed earthenware, which Puebla had with Peru until 1710, ceased entirely.⁹³

Roads were scarce and in a deplorable condition. Estrella said,

"It is a disgrace to the Spanish nation that, at the end of two centuries and a half, this road [from Mexico to Vera Cruz] continues to be as neglected as at the time of the conquest, full of dangers, embarrassments, and a thousand inconveniences. At length, about 1796, an active and intelligent viceroy, Branciforte, undertook this great design; and the road was begun to be conducted by Puebla de los Angeles, Córdoba, and Orizaba. The distance is about eighty American leagues . . . In

⁹²Branciforte á Varela. Mexico, April 26, 1796, MS, num. 394 reservada. Archivo General de Mexico. BL.

⁹³Humboldt, II, 9.

this distance the caravans of mules wasted twenty-two days in the dry season, and during the rains not less than thirty-five days were employed, so as greatly to enhance the value of commodities, a mule's load from Vera Cruz to Mexico costing eleven dollars. Three quarters of the road are plain and proper for carriages, while the rest is mountainous, so that no carriage could be employed; and the expense of bringing a new coach from Vera Cruz to the capital was not less than three hundred dollars. In all this place there is only one large river to pass, and a bridge might be easily constructed. The number of mule loads is about fifty thousand annually, and the expense is prodigious where large articles are to be transported; while on a good road, wagons might perform the journey in seven or eight days."

In 1798 the new road was extended to Puebla and compared very favorably to the best roads in Europe, but sad to say the Mexican highways were not kept in repair.⁶⁴ Humboldt thought that it would be a good thing to introduce camels into Mexico to carry goods from the Pacific to the Atlantic coast because they suffered much less than horses and mules from dry climate and lack of water. A few of those animals had been used in Peru in the latter sixteenth century, but they were not kept since the encomenderos did not want them. As Mexico did not have navigable rivers, this well-informed traveller also suggested that there should be artificial navigation between Mexico City and Tampico. He believed that a canal could be constructed through the intendancy of Oaxaca to unite the two oceans.⁶⁵ José María Qirós said that the possibility of uniting the Coatzacoalcos and Chimalapa Rivers with that of Tehuantepec so that the Atlantic Ocean might communicate with the Pacific by a short canal of five or six leagues would cause great benefits to the provinces of

⁶⁴Pinkerton, *op. cit.*, III, 224-225.

⁶⁵*Ensayo político sobre Nueva España*, IV, 44-47, 54, 32-33.

Vera Cruz, Oaxaca, and Puebla; for then there would be an easy outlet for their manufactures and products, they could receive those of the South Sea coasts, and send their goods to Europe without difficulty. He stated that Viceroy Revillagigedo had given orders for various examinations to be made and some interesting data was collected. He also believed that the general public opinion was favorable to the project; certain chiefs of the body of engineers, Corral, Constanzó, and Mascaró, and the traveler, Humboldt, thought that it could be done and would be very profitable to the country.⁹⁶ Several viceroys called the attention of the government to this plan, but nothing was done about the Tehuantepec canal route.

Internal trade was somewhat interfered with on account of rivalry between the merchants of Mexico City and Vera Cruz—a rivalry between the merchants of the plains and those of the warm regions. The merchants of the capital were nearer to the government and therefore they knew how to make use of their central position to their own advantage. Each group tried to cause the viceroy to distrust their enemies, accusing them of a secret desire for independence and political liberty. Spain paid no attention to those dissensions, but secretly found satisfaction in them, believing that its position would be strengthened by the internal disagreements between the natives and Spaniards, and between the whites who inhabited the coasts and those who dwelt on the mesa of the interior.⁹⁷

This commercial emulation between the merchants of Mexico City and Vera Cruz may have been one reason why the latter city was so popular a place for rebel groups; besides that port had many possible advantages which might be obtained by greater trading privileges with foreign nations. There was a slow estrangement and separa-

⁹⁶Memoria de estatuto. Causas de que ha procedido que la agricultura, industria y minería de Nueva España no hayan adquirido el gran fomento de que son susceptibles. Vera Cruz, Jan. 18, 1818, AGI, 2518 (96-3-3). Adudencia de Méjico.

⁹⁷Humboldt, *Ensayo político sobre Nueva España*, IV, 83-84.

tion taking place between the two municipalities. Vera Cruz had felt the effects of liberal influences, which sprang up from contact with foreign peoples and ideas, more than the capital; for, no matter how heavy the restrictions at such a port, individual merchants from all over the world would come and leave their influence. Since the inhabitants were inspired by new ideas and were trade competitors of the capital, Vera Cruz later proved to be an excellent place from which to launch liberal movements; also the strategic value of the city was so important that it was very worth while for any revolutionary leader to secure control of it.⁹⁸

The coastwise trade flourished under free commerce and assumed an importance hitherto unsuspected. Vera Cruz alone received four or five hundred boats a year, but Acapulco was visited by only about ten vessels. The west coast intercourse took place with Guatemala, Zacutula, and San Blas; likewise four or five ships were sent annually from Mexico to Guayaquil and Lima. Humboldt found that the commerce with Guayaquil and Lima, consisting of copper, oil, a little wine from Chile, sugar from Peru, Peruvian bark, and cacao of Guayaquil for the internal consumption of New Spain, was not very progressive. The return cargo from Mexico had almost reached the vanishing point, being reduced to manufactured wool from Querétaro and a little grain. The great distance between Acapulco and Guayaquil, which took vessels three or four weeks to traverse; the adverse winds, currents and calms; and the crudely constructed Spanish boats that were unable to resist the elements—were the reasons he gave for this unsuccessful commerce.⁹⁹ However the coastwise trade between Campeche, Vera Cruz, and Tampico was more successful, and in 1804 from fifteen to twenty American vessels went around Cape Horn into the Pacific.¹⁰⁰ In 1813 the consulado of Vera Cruz still complained that the

⁹⁸Wilfrid Hardy Callcott, *The Church and State in Mexico 1822-1857* (Durham, 1926), 74-75.

⁹⁹Humboldt, IV, 84, 90-92.

¹⁰⁰*Ibid.*, IV, 111-113.

coasting-trade was interfered with by excessive dues exacted by the notary of the public treasury. The cost of examining boats by master carpenters, the captains of ports demanding master-rolls of the ship when matriculation was no longer required, and the need of captains or owners paying duties on the cargoes in the customhouse of entrance before they obtained permission to unload were some of the other hindrances to commerce.¹⁰¹

The Philippine commerce continued to be profitable after free trade was inaugurated. The rich merchandise from the Orient was eagerly awaited every year by the people of New Spain, and as soon as news of the arrival of the Manila galleon came, the road to Acapulco was covered with people. The merchants hastened to be the first ones on the scene to trade; sometimes certain powerful commercial houses bought all the goods before the news of the landing of the vessels reached Vera Cruz. Then the goods were taken to Mexico City by the merchants to be distributed in the entire viceroyalty of New Spain. The return galleon was loaded with silver, some cochineal, cacao, wine, oil and Spanish woolen textiles. The precious metals exported to the Philippines usually amounted to 1,000,000 or 1,300,000 pesos annually. Ordinarily the boats carried a number of passengers, mostly friars, government officials, and vicious young men whose families sent them to the distant islands for punishment and correction. In 1804 there were seventy-five passengers on board the galleon.¹⁰² At the end of the eighteenth century the fare to the Philippines was \$1000 and \$500 for the return; it was a long and tiresome voyage and usually took ninety days on the sea. The Italian traveler Gamelli went on that voyage and spent one hundred and four days on

¹⁰¹El consulado de Vera Cruz representa á V. E. los vicios y trabos que se oponen á la libertad de la navegación de cabotage . . . Vera Cruz, Oct. 25, 1813, num. 38, AGI, 2518 (96-3-3). Audiencia de Méjico.

¹⁰²Humboldt, IV, 100-101; Riva Palacio, III, 22; Niceto de Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico desde sus tiempos más remotos hasta nuestros días* (Mexico, 1877-1882), V, 550-552.

the sea. He declared that the journey was "enough to destroy a man or make him unfit for anything as long as he lived."¹⁰³

"The failure of the Philippine galleon to arrive causes a scarcity of many things in this country," said the marqués de Croix.¹⁰⁴ All classes of people from the proud creoles of the larger municipalities to the Indians of the warm lands, whom the Spanish laws compelled to wear clothes, were dressed in the fabrics of the Orient—in the silks of China, or cottons of Luzon and India.¹⁰⁵ The greater part of the rich textiles of China were consumed by the Spaniards, creoles, and well-to-do mestizos of the capital, although some also went to the provincial towns. Mexican merchants obtained a large profit on the sale of those goods and they often increased it by making their purchase at Manila instead of at Acapulco; thus they eliminated the Filipino as a middleman. Business trips to Manila by merchants of New Spain were not favored because of the greater possibility for fraud. In the east Spanish subjects were not permitted to trade directly with China, since that commerce was in the hands of Chinese merchants, who formed the major part of the population of Manila. The Philippine commerce in silk, without a doubt, helped to destroy the silk industry in Mexico, which dated from the time of Cortés and for a while flourished in the Misteca district and in the city of Puebla.¹⁰⁶ Finally the Manila galleons were permanently suppressed by the king on September 25, 1818, at which time he approved a decree of the Cortes of September 14, 1813, which had abolished the galleons from Acapulco and declared the inhabitants

¹⁰³Herman G. James and Percy A. Martin, *The Republics of Latin America* (New York, cop. 1923), 52.

¹⁰⁴Croix to the marquis of Henchin, June 20, 1769. In *Correspondance du marquis de Croix capitaine general des armees de S. M. C., vice-roi du Mexique* (Nantes, 1891), 218.

¹⁰⁵Riva Palacio, II, 516.

¹⁰⁶William Lytle Schurz, "Mexico, Peru, and the Manila Galleon." *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Nov. 1918, pp. 390-393; Haring, 147-148.

of the Philippines free to carry on commerce in their own boats. At first the Manila merchants complained about the order, but they soon adjusted themselves to the new conditions.¹⁰⁷

After free commerce was established the national wealth increased every year; this was true in all branches of finance. Luxuries were more in demand than ever before in Mexico. Finer fabrics were needed, therefore New Spain was more dependent upon Europe and Asia. The registration of the customhouses was 11,000,000 pesos before 1791, but by 1804 it rose to 14,000,000 pesos; more precious metals were sent to Spain. Before the period of free trade from 1766 to 1778 some 379,000,000 pesos went to the mother country, but from 1779 to 1791 this amount had increased to 460,000,000 pesos, or there was a balance of 81,000,000 pesos in favor of free trade. In the latter period the king's share of the precious metals amounted to 14,554,810 pesos due to free commerce. The general public revenues of Mexico showed the good effects of the liberal reglamento of 1778. From 1765 to 1777 the public revenues were 131,135,285 pesos and from 1778 to 1790 they were augmented to 233,302,557 pesos, or a balance of 102,167,271 pesos to the credit of free trade.¹⁰⁸ Even little Yucatan felt the benefits of free commerce and began to earn profits. In the first six months of the year 1794 the imports into that province were 138,324 pesos and the exports 207,862 pesos;¹⁰⁹ in the last six months of the same year the imports amounted to 186,921 pesos and the exports to 171,474 pesos.¹¹⁰ By 1796 they

¹⁰⁷El virey de N. E. conde de Venadito al ministro de hacienda. Mexico, May 31, 1820, num. 1042, AGI, 2522 (96-3-7). Audiencia de Méjico.

¹⁰⁸Humboldt, IV, 125-133.

¹⁰⁹Estado del comercio de este puerto en los seis meses primeros del presente año que se forma con arreglo á la Rl. orden de 8 de Octubre de 1788. Campeche, Sept. 6, 1794, AGI, 2506 (96-2-12). Audiencia de Méjico.

¹¹⁰Estado del comercio de este puerto en los seis meses ultimos del año de 1794, que se forma en virtud de real orden de 8 de Octubre de 1788. Campeche, July 21, 1795, *ibid.*

had greatly increased, the imports were 638,824 pesos and the exports 295,339 pesos.¹¹¹

The principal exports from Mexico were gold and silver in bars or made into designs by the silversmiths, cochineal, sugar, flour, indigo, salted meats, dried vegetables or other eatables, tanned leather, vanilla, Jalapa root, soap, dye-wood, pimienta, and sassafras. The imports were cloth, paper, whisky, cacao, mercury, iron, steel, wine, and wax. In time of foreign war commerce decreased and it was always checked when epidemics raged in Vera Cruz because Europeans became the victims. Likewise yellow fever and typhus paralyzed internal commerce. According to a report of the consulado in 1802, the total commerce of New Spain amounted to 60,445,955 pesos—21,998,588 for imports and 38,447,367 for exports. But this balance did not include products imported at the expense of the royal treasury. When the latter figures were added commerce mounted to 82,047,000 pesos—57,947,000 for exports and 24,100,000 for imports. This commerce was carried on by 558 boats, 291 arriving and 267 leaving Mexico. In the next year the fear of war greatly diminished the exports from Vera Cruz. At that time the total commerce, not including the articles imported at the expense of the royal treasury, dropped to 34,349,634 pesos, of which 19,866,717 pesos were imports and only 14,482,917 were exports. Adding to this amount the goods imported at government expense, the total sum was 43,897,000 pesos—20,922,000 pesos exports and 22,975,000 pesos imports. The number of vessels had also decreased to 419, of which 214 brought imports and 205 took exports to Spain. In 1804 after the war scare was over commerce advanced again.¹¹²

¹¹¹Estado del comercio de este puerto en los seis primeros meses de este año, que se forma en virtud de real orden de 8 de Octubre de 1788. Campeche, June 30, 1796, AGI, 2507 (96-2-13). Audiencia de Méjico.

¹¹²Humboldt, IV, 57-58, 153-154, 65-76. The total balance of commerce in Vera Cruz from 1796 to 1820 was 537,640,234 pesos; the imports were 259,105,946 pesos and the exports 278,534,288 pesos.

Commerce was not altogether successful under free trade, although it had greatly increased. It could not compete with foreign commerce. Abad Queipo asked the question "Why is our flour of Puebla not able to compete in Havana with that from the United States of North America?" He showed that the lands of Mexico were superior, that workmen were paid two reales a day, but in the United States they were paid double that amount, that the Puebla flour was sent twenty-five or thirty leagues while the flour of the northern nation had to be transported thirty or forty leagues and even greater distances, that the voyage from Vera Cruz to Havana took fourteen or fifteen days and the journeys of the rival country took much longer, that the flour from New Spain entered Havana without duties but that from the United States had to pay heavy duties when entering any Spanish port, yet the Americans sold it for six pesos a barrel less than the Mexicans.¹¹² The liberal bishop said that the differences were due to the enormous burdens which Mexico had to sustain and to the many obstacles imposed upon commerce, not counting the seasons and climate. He declared that if the flour of his country did enter Havana free the dues paid by the Americans were not equivalent to a sixth part of what the Mexicans paid in other ways. Besides the merchants of New Spain carried on commerce largely with foreign capital for which they had to pay interest. Queipo stated that traders in the viceroyalty always owed foreigners fifteen or twenty million pesos. With the exception of ten or twelve houses in Mexico City and Vera Cruz which had part of their capital in ready money, all the other merchants of the country possessed barely enough of it necessary for their business. The money in circulation was only one-twentieth of the capital invested. About one-twentieth of the two hundred thousand merchants carried on business with their own funds. All the others had to use foreign capital pay-

¹¹²"Representación á nombre de los labradores y comerciantes de Michoacán . . ." Valladolid, Oct. 24, 1805. *In* Mora, I, 86-87.

ing an interest of five per cent, or conduct their enterprises on credit at a loss of fifteen per cent. The more unscrupulous merchants, who lacked capital to carry on their own commercial ventures, loaned their names for the introduction of merchandise from other nations into New Spain under the protection of their government. The unjust tariffs in the customhouses, all the appraisements of which were left to the caprice and arbitrariness of visitations, administrators, and of a receiver who obtained fourteen per cent from everything; the lack of hard cash for circulation, which caused considerable arrears in all payments and great slowness in the transaction of business which prevented new undertakings; the outbreak of wars which caused prices to rise from one hundred to three hundred per cent on most articles; and the inability to maintain the profitable commerce of one possession with another because of distances, poor roads, rainy or dry seasons, delays of registeries, municipal regulations, and customhouses—these were the other causes which the shrewd ecclesiastic gave for the failure to meet foreign competition.¹¹⁴ A rich commercial harvest was reaped by foreigners after free trade was permitted; from September 1786 to 1787 they imported into Mexico 58,307,452 pesos' worth of merchandise and in the next year goods to the amount of 67,920,231 pesos.¹¹⁵

Queipo was certain that for the last twenty years exports exceeded imports by many millions of pesos, in spite of the numerous hindrances to commerce, and this was as it should be. At the same time a large quantity of hard cash, which before was accumulated and circulated in New Spain, was sent to the mother country. He said that if the statistics of entry and departure which were published from the time of the establishment of the consulado of

¹¹⁴"Representación á nombre de los labradores y comerciantes de Michoacán . . ." Valladolid, Oct. 24, 1805. *In* Mora, I, 91-92, 107, 89, 94, 143; Riva Palacio, II, 891.

¹¹⁵Expediciones de generos extranjeros para Vera Cruz, desde Octubre de 1787, con el valor de sus cargamentos. AGI, 2505 (96-2-11). Audiencia de Méjico.

Vera Cruz were compared, the result would be that the transportation of silver from that port added to that of Acapulco would amount to more than all the silver coined in Mexico. Little of the precious metal existed for commercial transactions in that country or could be stored up, but miners' letters of credit circulated freely three or four months before their payment. The bishop prophesied that commerce would greatly increase in the following years because all the ordinary revenues of the king were augmented and extraordinary ones had been created.¹¹⁶

The famous prelate was an enthusiastic advocate of free commerce under the reglamento of 1778, declaring that, after commerce got rid of its obstacles, it gave a general impetus to society, multiplied greatly the agents of agriculture, industry, commerce, and all the products of those branches. Consequently the means of subsistence and occupations of men were increased and thus the population grew.¹¹⁷ Within twenty years the population had increased almost one-fifth and the production of the country more than one-third on account of the good effects of the system. The condition of the inhabitants was also improved, they consumed more than formerly, and the revenues of the crown were doubled.¹¹⁸ Queipo hoped that the government would permit a reciprocal commerce with all the other Spanish possessions and foreign commerce under conditions which were wise for the welfare of the state. By this means, he thought that contraband trade, which injured the royal treasury so much without any benefit to the people, might be abolished and the revenues be increased.¹¹⁹

In 1810 the bishop sent a petition to the regency of Spain saying,

¹¹⁶"Representación a nombre de los labradores y comerciantes de Michoacán . . ." *In Mora*, I, 95-96; "Escrito presentado a D. Manuel Sisto Espinosa del consejo de estado . . ." Madrid, 1807. *In Mora*, I, 106-107.

¹¹⁷"Escrito presentado á D. Manuel Sisto Espinosa del consejo de estado . . ." Madrid, 1807. *In Mora*, I, 104.

¹¹⁸"Representación a la regencia . . ." Valladolid de Michoacán, May 30, 1810. *In Mora*, I, 153-154.

¹¹⁹To the real acuerdo of Mexico . . . Valladolid, March 16, 1809, *ibid.*, I, 123.

"May your Majesty be pleased to give to this system all the extension which the true interests of the monarchy demand, that all the authorized ports of the peninsula and the adjacent islands large or small may be free to navigate and carry on commerce in all the regions of the world, that all the large and small ports of the coasts of America and of the adjacent islands shall enjoy a similar right to navigate and carry on commerce among themselves and with the metropolis and adjacent isles."

He showed that all the other maritime nations of Europe had always granted this liberty to all the ports of their kingdoms. France and England conceded it from the beginning of their colonies; as a result, agriculture, arts, commerce, navigation, and science had progressed in those nations. He maintained that Spaniards would be ruined by the opposite system. On the other hand, under free commerce, Catalonia would find more advantageous markets in America for its industry and fruits and Andalusia for its oils and wines, the more the inhabitants of the colonies prospered and grew in numbers. Queipo added that all the surplus of industry which the metropolis could acquire for some centuries and all the products of marine exportation would not supply the consumption of New Spain if the conditions of its people were bettered, as they would necessarily be improved under free trade.¹²⁰ The noble bishop believed that European commerce would be much greater if it were not monopolized by eight or ten houses of Mexico City and Vera Cruz which, occupied with the excessive profits of the moment, advanced the prices of goods so much that there was no demand for their consumption and caused envy among the other merchants. He did not know what to suggest as a remedy for this, but declared that the intelligent tradesmen and other learned men could deal with it if the matter needed reform.¹²¹

¹²⁰"Representación á la regencia . . ." Valladolid de Michoacán, May 30, 1810. *In Mora*, I, 154-155.

¹²¹Al arzobispo virrey . . . Valladolid, Aug. 14, 1809, *ibid.*, I, 130.

José María Quirós was another advocate of free commerce. He believed that national goods should be free from all dues and contributions of any kind and that only three per cent should be demanded from foreigners. He said that maritime commerce in general was restricted because overseas exportation was not protected as it should have been and the coast traffic was not extended as much as possible by means of the many navigable rivers. He added that the commerce permitted to neutrals in 1797 and the favors granted in 1804 to various foreign houses of Europe and of the united provinces of North America were not good for Mexico, since they came with textiles of cotton and linen which they sold at low prices compared to those of the viceroyalty, and as a result there was no demand for its goods, causing loss to manufacturers, agriculture, and the crops, also the precious metals flowed out of the kingdom.¹²²

The wars for independence came too soon to realize all the beneficial results from free commerce, but the idea was firmly implanted in the minds of the people. The operations of war are destructive and they always paralyze commerce; thus in the first epoch of independence commerce decayed, and agriculture and industry were ruined. Until 1810 Puebla carried on an extensive trade with every part of Mexico and with Havana, however after that date it declined and became unimportant. At the same time the industrial arts of Puebla, the cotton crops of Vera Cruz, sugar growing on the beautiful haciendas of Córdoba, and the cochineal industry were destroyed. Foreign commerce just about disappeared because the natives had no knowledge of it and they were not able to build large boats for the high seas.¹²³ In 1812 Vera Cruz lacked provisions and

¹²²Memoria de ystituto en que se manifiesta, que ni España ha adquirido con la posesión de las Americas las grandes ventajas de que eran susceptible, ni estas han conseguido todo el fomento que han demandado sus excelentes proporciones. Vera Cruz, Dec. 31, 1812, AGI, 2516 (96-3-1). Audiencia de Méjico.

¹²³Estevan de Antuñano, "Discurso analítico de algunos puntos de moral y economia política de Méjico . . ." Puebla, 1834. In *Papeles varios*, 61,

could not obtain them because of the invasion of the interior regions. The ayuntamiento, with the approval of the intendant, Carlos Urrutia, decided to permit for one year the entrance of food products in Spanish boats coming from the ports of the peninsula or from foreign ones, under the condition that half of their cargo should be flour and without the obligation of register. This measure was opposed so vigorously by the ministers of the treasury of Vera Cruz and the tribunal of accounts of the capital that it was never put into effect.¹²⁴

Smuggling continued the same as ever during the revolutions and after independence was declared. In 1819 Ignacio Pérez said that all kinds of Anglo-American goods and arms were found on abandoned ranches on the frontiers of Nacogdoches.¹²⁵ There were many reports of the clandestine entrance of products from the United States into Mexico at New Orleans and along the Rio Grande River.¹²⁶ Juan Pérez discovered various Anglo-Americans established on Mexican territory for the purpose of trade with the Indian nations and the people of Nacogdoches. He said that they came secretly and had committed many crimes.¹²⁷ The Spaniards themselves were also considered as contrabandists during this period. In 1828 José María Burgas gave account to the ayuntamiento of Matamoras that 333 reams of Spanish paper and seventeen barrels of Castilian whisky were introduced clandestinely.¹²⁸

Mexican exports were scarce, and in 1835 Juan Almonte said that commerce was reduced to 8000 or 10,000 exported skins and to imports from New Orleans, but if

¹²⁴Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, Dec. 16, 1820, AGI, 1148 (88-1-11). Audiencia de Méjico.

¹²⁵Ignacio Pérez, [Report of foreign goods]. Rio Trinidad, Nov. 26, 1819. Archivo General de Mexico, tom. 162, num. 31, p. 431. BL.

¹²⁶Feliciano Quintero al alcalde de Matamoras, Juan de Ynojosa, dando noticia de contrabando en el Rio Grande. Matamoras 1826. *Matamoras Archives*, vol. 13, pp. 9-12. BL.

¹²⁷Juan Pérez al comandante general. Nov. 5, 1819. Archivo General de Mexico, tom. 162, num. 5, p. 242. BL.

¹²⁸José María Burgas al ayuntamiento. San Carlos, Nov. 10, 1828. *Matamoras Archives*, vol. 18, p. 103. BL.

there had been roads there would have been much trade with the north Mexican states. With great difficulty over 2,000,000 pesos' worth of commerce was carried on with Missouri, New Mexico, Chihuahua, and Durango. By 1837 the total commerce of Mexico amounted to \$1,400,-000 in United States money.¹²⁰

Internal trade depended upon the success of foreign commerce, thus for many years after the revolutions began it was struggling and in confusion. Moreover few efforts could be made to repair or build roads and improve transportation and communication.¹²⁰ Prices were extremely high and enormous profits were made on textiles. The towns-people could not afford to buy them, therefore they were badly dressed, ill-nourished and lodged. Foreign merchants could sell their goods cheap and Mexican merchants were ruined.¹²¹ When Mexico separated completely from Spain it opened wide its doors to foreign commerce and at the same time internal trade was encouraged. Esteván de Antuñano said that some profit was gained because native products of Mexico were in demand in Europe, ideas were enriched, and new economic knowledge was gained.¹²²

The foregoing discussion shows that at first the Spanish government maintained the doctrine of scrupulous monopoly, which it believed would give greater support to commerce, produce good effects for the treasury, and prevent other nations from trading with the American colonies. This was the selfish policy upheld by all nations—that colonies existed for the benefit of the mother country, and it did not permit any general development of their re-

¹²⁰"Noticia estadística sobre Tejas." Mexico, 1835. In *Papeles varios*, 213, num. 2, pp. 37-39, 96.

¹²⁰José María Jáurequi, "Discurso en que se manifiesta que deben bajarse los réditos á proporción del quebranto que hayan sufrido en la insurrección los bienes y giros de los deudores . . ." Mexico, 1820. In *Papeles varios*, 161, num. 22, p. 66.

¹²¹J. A. Escudero, "Noticias estadísticas del estado de Chihuahua." Mexico, 1834, *ibid.* 177, num. 1, p. 171.

¹²²"Discurso analítico de algunos puntos de moral y economía de Méjico . . ." Puebla, 1834, *ibid.*, 61, num. 3, pp. 30-31.

sources. Like other monarchies, Spain tried to derive economic benefit for its empire, but since it lacked efficient economic organization its efforts merely caused irritation to the colonists, disappointment to the Spaniards, and affronts to foreigners. The huge contraband trade, which helped to weaken the Spanish empire, was only one symptom of this inefficiency.

When the mercantile system broke down in other countries and could no longer be enforced, Spain was compelled to modify its commercial system. The result was the reglamento of 1778 for restricted free trade. On the whole free commerce caused New Spain to progress economically more than ever before; the revenues increased, industry flourished, the standard of living of the people improved, and the population grew. Perhaps more important than anything else, new progressive ideas entered the dependency with foreign commerce and helped to pave the way for independence. Unfortunately the wise measure for free commerce did not have all the beneficial effects expected, for Spain could not keep pace with the vast increase in production and in the volume of international trade which began in the latter part of the eighteenth century. Spain could not provide its colonies with the goods and capital needed for their development; therefore, after having experienced the benefits of free trade, they commenced to realize the possibilities in store for them if they should be able to shake off the Spanish yoke entirely.

IV.

ECONOMIC ASPECTS: INDUSTRY

Industry, which was closely allied with commerce, was also unprogressive in the Spanish colonies under the mercantilistic theories, since the only branches tolerated were those which did not conflict with the interests of Spain—a blind and stupid policy. The bad effects of this restriction were all the more glaring because Spain had little manufacture and could not supply its dependencies with the products needed for their consumption; therefore smuggling and evasion of the laws arose—the curses of Spanish colonial administration. Mining was always the most favored industry, for from it came the huge sums of precious metals that flowed into the mother country and helped to enrich all Europe. Agriculture too was encouraged, especially when colonial products were raised, since there was created a demand in Europe for new products like tobacco, cacao, cochineal, indigo, and vanilla. Cattle-raising also became important in New Spain on account of the vast extent of the country, the little expense involved in the industry, and its special adaptation to the large estates. Manufacture was more restricted and only such textiles and articles which could not compete with those of the peninsula were permitted, when it was impossible for Spain to furnish half of the supplies for the colonies.

Mining was one of the first industries to be developed, owing to the search for precious metals by the conquerors, and naturally it was always the most encouraged of all occupations because it was the principal source of revenue for the government. As in all medieval countries, at the beginning mines were considered the property of the Spanish crown, but Philip II decreed in 1584 that they were to be the permanent possession of those who discovered them

and as such might be freely sold, disposed of, or transferred. The king never exploited mines on his own account, with the exception of the quicksilver mines at Guancavelica in Peru. Generally the sovereign's interest in mines discovered on royal lands was sold, leased, or given away; therefore Baron von Humboldt, when he visited America in the early nineteenth century, could truly say that "all the metallic wealth of the Spanish colonies is found in the hands of private individuals." Nevertheless, the king required from his subjects for the privilege of the development of the mines one-fifth of all precious metals mined.¹

The mineral wealth of New Spain has been notorious through all its history. The quantity of silver produced during the time of the Spanish occupation is astounding and even to-day some mines seem to be inexhaustible. Many new ones have been discovered and in recent years old and abandoned workings have been reopened and are still found to be rich. Not quite so much gold was mined, but the output was of considerable value. Among the precious stones were found amber, some diamonds, amethysts, turquoise, jasper, marble, alabaster, jade, and onyx.² There were large deposits of copper, quicksilver, and iron, however those metals were neglected by Spain. The Spaniards saw little value in the iron mountain at the side of the city of Durango, composed almost entirely of pure magnetic iron ore and believed to be the largest single lump of iron in the world.³

It was no wonder that the Spaniards were dazzled by the large quantities of gold and silver which would have made the eyes of Croesus start from their sockets. From the famous mine near Somberete more than 700,000 marks of silver were extracted in five or six months. In thirty-eight years the mines of Guanajuato produced 43,030 marks of gold and 18,723,537 marks of silver. The mine

¹Haring, *op. cit.*, 155-156.

²Pinkerton, *op. cit.*, III, 263.

³Winton, *op. cit.*, 21-22.

of the count of Valencia in that province yielded from 1787 to 1791 the sum of 1,737,052 marks of silver. Sometimes the owner obtained 1,200,000 pesos as an annual income, and from 1794 to 1802 the output of this mine was 13,835,380 pesos. The mines of Zacatecas produced annually from 2500 to 3000 barrels of silver valued at 134 marks a barrel. The total amount of precious metals mined in Mexico in one year was simply prodigious. The silver extracted from 1690 to 1800 was 149,350,722 marks, and the gold and silver mined from 1690 to 1809 was 1,499,435,898 pesos, a sum so large that it confused the imagination. In one year in 1801 the gold and silver obtained in New Spain amounted to 16,568,000 pesos, but in 1803 the sum was increased to 23,166,906 pesos.⁴ Humboldt stated that the silver extracted from the mines in Mexico was ten times greater than that from all the mines of Europe. He said that Vera Cruz exported annually two-thirds of all the silver mined in the entire world. Of this amount the royal treasury obtained its share. Between 1785 and 1789 the king's portion from the fifth which entered into the treasury was 9,730,000 marks of silver.⁵

Before free trade was established, Bernardo Ward, in 1762, lamented the unprogressiveness of the mines. He said that it consisted in the poverty of the miners, the inexperience of those who directed the work, and the lack of protection by the government; yet in spite of the defects thousands of millions of pesos were produced. Many exactions were made upon poor miners and there was much abuse in the distribution of quicksilver for amalgamation purposes. Quicksilver which the king ordered sold at 82 pesos a quintal cost the miners 230 pesos. Because of such vexations and exorbitant prices the miners gained little and were often ruined, since they did not have their own capital. If the miners were ruined, then the king did not receive his fifth. The wise minister believed that the

⁴Humboldt, III, 46-189.

⁵*Ibid.*, III, 43, 38.

greatest care should be taken in the management of mines. He suggested that conditions could be improved if there were engineers to find means to pump the mines, if subterranean architecture would be used to strengthen them, if the art of separating the minerals could be improved, and if there was better economic management. He also thought that the rich copper deposits should be worked.⁶

Some of the advice of the shrewd minister of commerce must have been taken, for even before free trade there was a steady growth in the production of the mines. The king also sent German experts to the colonies to instruct the miners in the latest European methods and to increase the output of the mines.⁷ Humboldt said that for one hundred and thirteen years the proceeds from the mines was constantly augmented except from 1760 to 1767 and 1785 to 1788. After 1768 the diminishing of the royal dues, the king's fifth being changed to one-tenth, the decrease of the price of quicksilver, the formation of an organization of miners, and public instruction in the School of Mines—were the principal causes for this increase.⁸ Free trade had a good effect upon the production of precious metals; for example, from 1766 to 1778 the silver and gold coined in Mexico was 191,589,179 pesos, but from 1779 to 1795 it was 252,524,412 pesos, or an increase of one-fourth in favor of free commerce.⁹ Other reforms like the suppression of the alcabala on purchases needed for the mines and the fixing of the price of powder at four reales instead of six on a pound of silver greatly contributed to the promotion of mining.¹⁰

The problem of providing a sufficient amount of quicksilver for the process of amalgamation, used in Mexico since 1557, was a serious one. Whenever there was a scarcity of the metal in New Spain or the price was raised

⁶Proyecto económico . . . 273-276.

⁷Juan Vicente Revillagigedo, *Instrucción reservada* (Mexico, 1831), art. 481 et seq.

⁸Humboldt, III, 189-191.

⁹*Ibid.*, III, 186.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, III, 191.

mining decreased. Since quicksilver was a government monopoly, the supply for Mexico came from Almadén in Spain, and was controlled by treasury officials who often abused the power intrusted to them. They favored their wealthy friends and the small mine owners could not obtain the quantity of the metal needed, therefore on many occasions the viceroys had to intervene in favor of the small miners. Sometimes the metal was kept in the storehouse of Mexico City a long time and mining suffered. In 1800 the tribunal of mining reported to the viceroy that one thousand and two quintales of quicksilver remained in the depository of the capital and did not reach its destination on account of the difficulty of transporting the small amount which belonged to each royal mine.¹¹ Although there was an abundance of quicksilver in Guancavelica in Peru, it was not transported to the northern viceroyalty until late in the colonial period. There were decrees which prohibited the working of the deposits in Nueva Galicia, but finally dire necessity caused the orders to be suspended. Viceroy Matías de Gálvez tried to obtain mercury from China, however the project was a dismal failure.¹²

Viceroy Marquina asked the king to permit him to obtain quicksilver through the English island of Jamaica, since it cost from one hundred to one hundred and fifty pesos a quintal to bring the metal directly from Europe. He explained that when mercury was not supplied mining ceased and more than one hundred thousand workers were deprived of employment and the government lacked means to support their families. Besides those men would wander about the country and commit crimes while the foreign war continued and there would be no forces available to stop them. The viceroy added that when quicksilver was not furnished for the mines the treasury suffered a loss of more than 2,000,000 pesos. He heard that there was a supply

¹¹Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, Dec. 6, 1802, AGI, 1140 (88-1-3). Audiencia de Méjico.

¹²Humboldt, III, 286.

of over thirty thousand quintales of the metal in Hamburg and that it could be obtained for twenty or twenty-five pesos a quintal if it were brought to Jamaica by some English house. He hoped the sovereign would approve of his plan because there was no other way to obtain the much needed quicksilver.¹³ At the time of Humboldt's visit to Mexico the tribunal of mining spent thirty thousand pesos on the extraction of quicksilver from the vein of San Juan de la Chica, but with little success.¹⁴

When war broke out the shortage of quicksilver caused serious consequences. Abad Queipo said that Guanajuato alone ceased to consume 9,000,000 pesos' worth of the metal in 1799, 1800, and 1801, because it could not be obtained. The tribunal of mining and the rich silver miners in Guanajuato, Zacatecas, and Catorce desired to prevent such evils by having a reserve supply of 80,000 or 100,000 quintales of the metal and they had collected funds for that purpose. The thoughtful bishop advised that the reserve supply should be established for the good of mining, since the annual consumption of the amalgamation metal in New Spain was more than 18,000 quintales.¹⁵ Finally in 1811 the Spanish Council of Regency permitted the free development of the quicksilver mines in Mexico, the same as those of gold and silver. No longer was the metal sold to the state, but anybody who needed it might buy it.¹⁶

In 1787 it was said that 50,000 families were employed in mining and the occupations which sprang from it. Included in this number were the employees of the mint, owners of mines, merchants who subsisted by mining, overseers, workers, and mulateers, excluding the vagabonds and

¹³Marquina á Miguel Cayetano Soler. Mexico, July 27, 1801, num. 342 reservada, AGI, 1155 (88-1-19). Audiencia de Méjico.

¹⁴Humboldt, III, 3.

¹⁵"Escrito presentado á D. Manuel Sisto Espinosa del consejo de estado . . ." Madrid, 1807. *In* Mora, I, 113-114.

¹⁶"Decreto derogando las disposiciones que prohiben el laborio de las minas de azogue, concediendo libertad para trabajarlas y vender el metal." Jan. 26, 1811. *In* Hernández y Dávalos, II, 487-489.

corrupt women who maintained themselves at the expense of many workers in the mines. The miners therefore formed about one-fifth of the population of Mexico, which at that date was three million; consequently it was urged that the useful industry should be promoted.²⁷ At the turn of the nineteenth century there were five or six thousand persons engaged in the amalgamation of minerals or handling them. They were far from prosperous; many of them passed their life walking barefoot over the mountains and working the metals. Humboldt said that it was a wonder they were healthy, but physicians declared that they had good health.²⁸

Quite a contrast was their life to that of the rich mine owners! One of the wealthiest families of New Spain was that of the count of Valencia which possessed estates valued at 5,000,000 pesos, without counting the mine of Valencia near Guanajuato which had an annual output of 75,000 pesos. From its mining interests alone the family received a yearly income of 140,000 pesos. A cousin of this count of Valencia at one time obtained 1,200,000 pesos annually from his mine, but during the last twenty-five years of his life this sum greatly decreased. This noted man had come to America without a fortune and he lived very moderately. The count of Regla was also famous because of his wealth, and his son the marqués San Cristóbal was distinguished in Paris for his knowledge of physics and philosophy. In five or six months a mine of the Fagoaga family in the district of Somberete yielded 4,000,000 pesos thus making the family one of the wealthiest in Mexico. As to-day money gained rapidly was spent with the same ease. Rich proprietors of mines frequently gave huge sums to charlatans to put into new undertakings and became ruined. The Fagoaga family loaned a friend 700,000 pesos without interest, hoping

²⁷Proyecto del Antonio del San José Muro. Mexico, April 16, 1787, AGI, 1879 (92-4-3). Audiencia de Méjico. At the same time there were 1,500,000 persons without any definite employment in Mexico.

²⁸*Ensayo político sobre Nueva España*, I, 151.

to assure him a fortune, but this sum was lost in a new mine which did not turn out well. Moreover, large amounts of money were spent on works of architecture like the edifice of the tribunal of mining. Some men invested their money wisely in lands and later devoted themselves to agriculture.¹⁹

José María Quirós estimated the annual mineral production of Mexico at 27,951,000 pesos in time of peace before the insurrections began.²⁰ During the disturbances of the early revolutions, naturally there was a decrease in the production of the mines. From 1806 to 1810 the output of the mines of Mexico was 2,155,927 marks of silver and 9383 marks of gold, but in the turbulent years from 1811 to 1815 it dropped to 1,246,586 marks of silver and 3733 marks of gold. Again from 1816 to 1819 it increased to 1,157,527 marks of silver and 2933 gold marks. In 1821 there was a decrease in mineral production and in 1825 an increase, and thus it continued for a number of years.²¹

Agriculture occupied the attention of the conquerors when the first glamor of the mineral wealth decreased. It was soon realized that Mexico had all the varieties of climate suited to the products of the tropics and the temperate zone, but the men who came to subdue the new country were little fitted for industry or work in the fields because for generations they had been distracted by national and religious conflicts. Although they were heroic and energetic, they sought in the Indies less laborious occupations than agriculture; hence they were willing to employ

¹⁹Humboldt, I, 243-245, 246-247.

²⁰Estado general de los productos anuales de agricultura, industria, artes y minerales de Nueva España en la época anterior á sus comociones intestinas. Vera Cruz, Jan. 15, 1817, AGI, 2518 (96-3-3). Audiencia de Méjico.

²¹Humboldt, III, 195. From the discovery of America Raynal said that Spain received 4,870,529,509 pesos from its colonies. Adam Smith stated that the annual income was 26,500,000 pesos. Humboldt declared that the Spanish dependencies produced 5,706,700,000 pesos from 1492 to 1803; of this amount 133,000,000 pesos went to Asia, 153,000,000 remained in America, and Spain obtained 5,420,000,000 pesos. Including the amount already mined and taken by the conquerors, Spain received 5,445,000,000 pesos from America in 311 years. *Ibid.*, III, 297-315.

Indians or negroes from Africa in the cultivation of the fields. The Spaniards introduced into New Spain useful plants like the orange, lemon, olive, the vine, wheat, sugar cane, coffee, and rice; they brought domestic animals and took over the cultivation of many American plants—cacao, maize, indigo, vanilla, tobacco, the potato, and cotton—which became valuable commercial products.

The methods and policy relative to agriculture were as unprogressive as those applied to commerce. Many restrictions were imposed upon colonial farming, but fortunately they were never strictly enforced. The Spanish court always viewed with suspicion the cultivation of the olive, the vine, the mulberry tree, hemp, flax, and many other products raised with profit in the home land; consequently royal orders repeatedly asked viceroys to prohibit the planting of vineyards. As late as the beginning of the nineteenth century the viceroy of Mexico was commanded to destroy the vines in the northern part of the country, where the wine industry flourished, because the wine merchants of Cádiz complained that their industry had decreased. Happily this decree like many others was never put into effect.²²

The manner in which the law was evaded is most interesting; it is shown in the cases of Josef Joaquín Márquez, an inhabitant of the town of Celaya in the province of Guanajuato, Fernando Movellan, and Ignacio Celis of Mexico City, when they asked permission to make wines and brandies from the grapes which they raised. The first gentleman had a vineyard near Celaya planted in 1788, and it seemed that the dispatches sent by Viceroy Cruíllas in 1761 to all the justices not to permit plantings of vines were never published in Celaya; therefore Márquez had proceeded in good faith when he planted his grapes. Movellan and Celis bought unoccupied lands from the treasury which had old plantings on them. In spite of

²²*Recopilación*, ley 18, tit. 17, lib. 4.

law 18, title 17, book 4 of the *Recopilación* which prohibited vines to be planted, the cultivation of those already in existence was permitted on condition of the payment to the royal treasury of two per cent of all proceeds from the fruits raised annually. The case brought up the question of the validity of the law. One minister was of the opinion that the request of Márquez should be granted if he paid five hundred pesos besides the two per cent required. The assessor general of the viceroyalty, Rafael Bachiller de Mena, believed that, since the king established the royal dues with the title of new impositions upon wines of the country, he tacitly approved the making of them and the cultivation of vineyards. Since orders publicly entered Mexico for the customhouses, the Provincias Internas, and other places, with the idea of allowing wines and brandies, and some of the vineyards were sold, the public opinion arose that the cultivation of vineyards was not prohibited and that the destruction of those already planted would cause a too grave situation not only for the owners but for the public, especially if the lands were not fit for the raising of other fruits. In view of this Viceroy Branciforte, in 1796, finally decided that the license asked should be given to Márquez. The Council of the Indies and the king agreed to the measure of the viceroy in the case of Márquez, Movellan, and Celis, since there were not so many vineyards in New Spain that they would injure the commerce of the metropolis in wines. In 1802 it was however decreed that no viceroys in the Americas should grant such permission in the future; when anybody asked to be allowed to make wines the expediente should be considered by the attorney-general of the town where he resided, by the ministers of the consulado, the civil fiscals, and the treasury in order to decide whether wine and brandy of grapes were needed and whether they would cause injury to Spanish commerce. Then they were to give account to the Council so that the king might determine what was best. At the same time it was declared that the law of the

Recopilación should be renewed to prohibit the planting of vineyards, but those already in existence should be permitted and the impositions which the treasury considered fit be made on the liquors.²³

Don Manuel de la Gandara, owner of an hacienda named Bledos in the province of San Luis Potosí, and *regidor* and chief ensign of that city, may be cited as another example. On April 11, 1803, he too asked permission to manufacture wine, explaining that he had an orchard with many fruit trees and he had planted twenty thousand vines from which to make wine and brandy for his own use, for the churches, and the adjacent towns. He did this in good faith, until he was hindered by the publication of the proclamation, in which was included the royal decree of July 21, 1802, which provided that royal license had to be obtained. He then secured a recommendation from the attorney-general of San Luis Potosí, who believed that utility would result to that city and the neighboring places, especially in time of war when the traffic of the peninsula was almost cut off, if local wines could be made; this would not injure Spanish commerce in liquors at any time, since it was not sufficient to supply the Americas. The attorney and the chief ministers of the royal treasury added that the wines of Gandara were inferior in quality to those of Spain and for that reason would not harm the industry of the peninsula. Next the consulado examined the matter; it showed that there was a scarcity of wine during the war even for medicines, that prices had gone up, and the liquors from Spain were so mixed that pure wine could scarcely be found in the country. The civil fiscal, the fiscal of the treasury, and the assessor general were of the same opinion and thought that the king should be asked for the license to make wines and that he should take measures to prevent the adulteration of those

²³Consejo de las Indias a la audiencia de Mexico. Madrid, July 21, 1802, AGI, 1788 (91-6-23). Audiencia de Méjico.

shipped from Spain.²⁴ Finally in 1807 permission was granted to Gandara to make wine.²⁵

Tobacco was permitted to be raised only in certain places since it was a government monopoly after 1765. If it were planted in other districts besides the ones specified by law it was regarded as contraband and the plants were in danger of being pulled up at any time. This happened in the intendancy of Vera Cruz in 1796 when there was a general raid upon the clandestine sowing of tobacco in the jurisdictions of Tabasco, Casamaluapan, and Acuyacan. The king approved of the destruction of the valuable product and the payment of the persons who had detected the unlawful cultivation; he also insisted upon the punishment of the criminals.²⁶ Lucas de Gálvez, intendant of Yucatan, asked the sovereign to relieve the terrible condition of agriculture and industry in his province by allowing the cultivation of tobacco the same as in Havana. He maintained that the scarcity of tobacco and contraband in it would disappear, and the public funds would be greatly increased, since Yucatan was especially fitted for that branch of agriculture. This time the king heeded the request and provided that the royal treasury should aid the new industry to get started. Needless to say that the intendant rejoiced and thanked the king very gratefully.²⁷

Under the more liberal régime of the memorable Charles III hemp and flax cultivation was encouraged. Some European cultivators were sent to Mexico to teach the Indians, but they returned home in 1786 without success. Viceroys like the great Revillagigedo and Branci-

²⁴Josef de Iturrigaray al ministro universal. Mexico, Sept. 26, 1804, num. 225, AGI, 1809 (91-7-19). Audiencia de Méjico.

²⁵Consejo de las Indias al virrey de Nueva España. Aranjuez, Feb. 28, 1807, *ibid.*

²⁶Expediente sobre exterminio de siembras de tabaco en la jurisdicción de la intendencia de Vera Cruz, y gratificación acordada á los que entendieron en ella. May 28, 1799, num. 23, AGI, 1310 (89-1-8). Audiencia de Méjico.

²⁷Representación del intendente de Yucatan, Lucas de Gálvez. Mérida de Yucatan, May 8, 1790, num. 109, AGI, 1323 (89-1-21). Audiencia de Méjico; Revillagigedo á Pedro de Lerena. Mexico, Dec. 4, 1790, num. 23, *ibid.*, Lucas de Gálvez á Pedro de Lerena. Mérida de Yucatan, Dec. 9, 1790, num. 25, *ibid.*

forte favored those branches of agriculture and orders came from Madrid in 1792, 1795, and 1796 to promote them; however all those praiseworthy efforts were useless because the lands were not suited for hemp and flax raising.²⁸

The reestablishment of silk raising was seriously discussed during the administration of the indomitable Revillagigedo. It was thought that this phase of agriculture would be very profitable for New Spain because the fertility of the soil and the mild climate favored the occupation. It would help to prevent the crimes produced by idleness as it would give employment to many people, it would increase agriculture and commerce, and at the same time augment the revenues of the treasury. The first individuals to advocate silk cultivation were Manuel Iturriaga and Pedro Antonio Septien of Querétaro; they advised that the silkworms be brought from the town of Tula where Fernando de Mendoza had already established them. If the industry were successful, it was believed that much wealth might be obtained. The viceroy favored the project and commissioned the intendant of the province to let Iturriaga and Septien put their experiment into effect in Querétaro. The botanical director, Martín Sese, supported them in their plan and the intendant too was enthusiastic about it, saying that more than 300,000 pesos, the profit of the silk from China, and 40,000 or 50,000 pounds of silk consumed by the kingdom might be saved. The intendant declared the undertaking worthy of the support of a powerful organization like the consulado and he thought that Mendoza should be aided for ten years to raise the silkworms. On December 11, 1792, seven of the eight ministers present in the viceroy's council voted against the establishment of factories for silk manufacture in Mexico, which had been proposed by Mendoza, affirming that it would not be convenient to adopt such means

²⁸Humboldt, III, 374; Díaz de Salcedo á Revilla Gigedo, San Luis Potosí, Dec. 4, 1792. AGI, 89-6-19. Audiencia de Mexico, papeleta 77. BL.

at that time. The viceroy feared that silk cultivation in Mexico would injure the Philippine commerce, and perhaps it was the trade between Manila and New Spain which had caused the silk industry to be neglected.²⁹ In spite of all the good intentions to promote the industry, it had the same fate as the attempts to encourage hemp and flax cultivation in New Spain.

Agriculture in Mexico was fairly productive notwithstanding the medieval methods employed, the political obstacles which hindered its progress, and the many vices of the feudal system that were transferred to the Spanish dependencies and survived there for many years. Cochineal was one of the principal products of the country since the Indians were especially adapted to the raising of the cochineal insect from which a scarlet dye was extracted. In 1802 the cochineal exported from Vera Cruz amounted to 3,368,557 pesos. Sugar was raised extensively on the warm coastal plains and in the same year 1,476,435 pesos' worth were shipped from the chief Mexican seaport.³⁰ Other agricultural exports from Vera Cruz were indigo, flour, vanilla, sarsaparilla, Jalapa root, pimienta, dried vegetables, and cacao.³¹ The Aztecs taught the Spaniards the use of the latter article and it was greatly demanded in Europe because the beverage chocolate was made from it.

In 1787 one of the laments of Antonio de San José Muro was that New Spain did not plant more than for its consumers. During a year of abundant crops there was an excess supply of grain, therefore the farmers decreased their sowings. As a result in a year of scarcity or when there was some calamity the people suffered hunger. If there were two or three years of unproductiveness as in Europe, Mexico was in the greatest distress, it suffered

²⁹El virrey de Nueva España conde de Revilla Gigedo remite el expediente seguido sobre restablecimiento de la industria rural de sedas . . . Mexico, Dec. 31, 1792, num. 314, AGI, 1302 (88-7-25). Audiencia de Méjico.

³⁰Humboldt, II, 413, 352.

³¹Humboldt, IV, 57-58.

from disease, and was depopulated. In 1765 the king permitted the exportation of grain, but in order to export that product it was necessary to plant more grain than was consumed. Muro believed that in an evil year exportation should be prohibited so that the price of wheat would not be raised; if the misfortune was repeated grain should be imported from foreign countries.³² José María Quirós estimated the total agricultural production in New Spain before the revolutionary disturbances began at 138,850,-121 pesos, of which amount 133,852,625 pesos went for interior consumption and 4,997,496 for exportation.³³ But at the beginning of the nineteenth century, according to Humboldt, the total production from agriculture in Mexico was 29,000,000 pesos annually, however he declared that the value of the amount exported was scarcely equal to that of the sugar of Cuba, which was 7,520,000 pesos.³⁴

Some plants like the maguey, often called the century plant, were cultivated entirely for colonial use. This species of the aloe family grows to a great height and produces an enormous quantity of starchy growth from which alcoholic liquors are obtained. The slightly fermented juice called pulque is still consumed in large amounts in Mexico to-day. The most injurious intoxicating drinks made from the distilled juice were called *mezcal* and *tequila*. The maguey plant was serviceable for its fibers from which crude cloth could be made, and it was used in the construction of native huts. At times the Spanish government freely permitted the use of pulque and at others restricted it. Abad Queipo believed that it should be generally allowed and be subject to a tax in order to obtain revenue for the treasury. The ecclesiastic thought that this would prevent the illicit production of the drink

³²Proyecto del Antonio de San José Muro. Mexico, April 16, 1787, AGI, 1879 (92-4-3). Audiencia de Méjico.

³³Estado general de los productos anuales de la agricultura, industria, artes y minerales de Nueva España en la época anterior á sus comociones intestinas. In Memoria de Estatuto. Vera Cruz, Jan. 15, 1817, AGI, 2518 (96-3-3). Audiencia de Méjico.

³⁴*Ensayo político sobre Nueva España*, II, 443; IV, 139.

and that within two or three years more than 1,000,000 pesos would enter the treasury. He said that the greatest quantity of wine sent from Spain did not exceed 32,000 barrels and that it could not supply the 5,500,000 inhabitants of Mexico.⁸⁵

Plans were proposed occasionally for the reform of agriculture. Bernardo Ward said,

"The welfare of the state consists principally in the cultivation of the land and the useful employment of men; these are the true power and solid wealth of every nation. The chief attention should be given to these two objects, and it is a rule, without exception, that the land never will be well cultivated, if the products do not belong to those who cultivate it; for, working for another, a man will never do what he will do if the product of his work is his own."

The liberal minister of commerce declared that there was great injury to agriculture because such large portions of land were given to Spaniards who only cultivated them by means of negroes and Indians and naturally they did not take any interest in their work. He advised the king to remedy this evil and cause the lands to be distributed to the Indians as owners or lessees. He thought that it would be wise and profitable to instruct the caciques in farming and then they could teach the other Indians what they learned; the increase in agriculture would more than pay for such instruction. He suggested that the intendants should pay more attention to the cultivation of native products with medicinal value, gums, woods, and others that were little known but would be useful to Europe and could become objects of commerce. Rewards should be offered to those who raised the largest quantities of native products and for the best quality of rare specimens; also

⁸⁵"Escrito presentado á D. Manuel Sisto Espinosa del consejo de estado . . ." Madrid, 1807. *In* Mora, I, 115.

any products which would cause internal commerce between the provinces should be increased and encouraged.³⁶

Ramón de Casada advocated effective agrarian laws and a good policy to encourage cattle raising, in order that labor might be increased; all the surplus products should be sent out of the country, for from this it would result that the miserable Indians would have a secure occupation in which to gain daily wages because they could sell what they raised with profit. They would have plenty of money to pay tribute and to support and protect their families. He maintained that abundance of agriculture promoted navigation and benefitted the places where the crops were cultivated, since farmers could exchange them for luxuries and all the goods needed; by this means other industrial nations became great. He said that all nations aspired to keep their independence in respect to others and it could be attained by industry; no state was poorer than the one the wealth of which consisted only in gold and silver, for it was merely a deposit with which to pay for products. Nations had in agriculture and industry all the resources to preserve independence because the consumption of their own products increased national wealth. If Spain could have added agricultural and industrial prosperity to its mass of precious metals, it would never need to fear any other power on earth and its situation would be more favorable than in the time of Charles I. The English colonies did not have mines, but they applied themselves to the cultivation of their lands and played a great part in the world. Casada thought that Spain might have done the same, however after the reign of Charles I agriculture was neglected and a century of decay of national splendor resulted. The wise Charles III and his efficient ministers endeavored to restore the ancient prosperous conditions and the effects were advantageous for agriculture in America. It was learned how to fertilize lands, to eliminate risks, and to economize expenses, roads were constructed,

³⁶*Proyecto económico . . .*, 257-273.

canals opened, rivers made navigable, other means of transportation were improved, and ordinances were issued to regulate public granaries and markets in order to supply the people and check excessive prices, all of which greatly aided agriculture and national prosperity.³⁷

Bishop Queipo believed in irrigation for the lands in the northern part of New Spain so that the vine and olive might be raised there.³⁸ Juan Cruz, the bishop of Guadalajara, also advocated irrigation, since without water agriculture was a risk. He reported that in some parts of Mexico there were scarcely any pastures, thousands of animals perished, and trees were lacking for shade and wood. Such places never would be profitable for farming or cattle raising until the government undertook to plant trees and provide for irrigation. He said that the towns, cities, villages, and proprietors could remedy the situation if they would plant trees, dig wells, and collect the surplus water into ponds.³⁹ Humboldt, who Morán y Crivelli called the first Mexican economist, said,

"If Mexico should have a wise government, if it should open its ports to all friendly nations, if it should receive Chinese and Malay colonists to populate its west coasts from Acapulco to Colima, they would increase the planting of coffee, cotton, and sugar cane; finally if there should be established a just equilibrium between the workers of agriculture, the workings of the mines, and the manufacturing industry, it could by itself in a few years give the Spanish government a financial utility double that of all Spanish America to-day."⁴⁰

³⁷Ramón de Casada, copia del pedimento fiscal de 30 de Noviembre de 1781 sobre extracción de arinas y otras comestibles á la isla de Havana y otras partes . . . num. 18, AGI, 2523 (96-3-8). Audiencia de Méjico.

³⁸"Representación á la regencia . . ." Valladolid, May 30, 1810. *In* Mora, I, 155.

³⁹Juan Cruz to the king. Guadalajara, Jan. 17, 1805. AGI, 104-7-17 (Audiencia de Guadalajara), pp. 21, 23-24. BL.

⁴⁰Tomás Morán y Crivelli, *Juicio crítico sobre el sistema de hacienda en México según la teoría francesa* (Madrid, 1865), 13. The annual contribution of all Spanish America to Spain at that time was estimated at 35,000,000 *pesos*.

Agriculture in Mexico was said to have been greatly benefitted by the war with Great Britain in 1779. All persons employed in the industry prospered, since there never had been exported so much flour, meat, and so many vegetables to Havana as in 1780, in order to sustain the army and the squadron; if more was not sent it was because it could not be done easily on account of transportation facilities. Viceroy Mayorga thought that the laborers, who had obtained such good prices for their crops, should be encouraged to double their sowings; they ought not be dismayed when the war ceased, for even in time of peace the exportation of agricultural products of the kingdom was needed. For the benefit of the royal service farmers should increase the planting of wheat, other products, and cattle raising, therefore the viceroy published a proclamation ordering justices, political officials, the archbishop, and bishops to use their influence to promote agriculture and cattle raising as much as possible.⁴¹

The system of land ownership which grew up in New Spain was a survival of medievalism and it helped to keep agriculture in a backward condition. From the beginning the lands were badly divided and they were accumulated by a small number of individuals. They went to the conquerors and their descendants, to employers, and merchants who cultivated them by means of Indians and negro slaves. The great mass of the people were left without sufficient lands. They always lived on another man's property and always expected to do so, therefore they had little incentive to own land for themselves. Since the landholders were few, there were great opportunities to amass enormous estates and this increased the difficulty of perfecting their cultivation. Until the middle of the eighteenth century everything favored the accumulation of lands in a few hands. The *encomiendas* could not be divided and entails preserved the large estates of the clergy

⁴¹Bando de Don Martín de Mayorga. Mexico, March 20, 1781, AGI, 2523 (96-3-8). Audiencia de Méjico.

and aristocracy.⁴² Humboldt said that four-fifths of the lands in Mexico were in mortmain.⁴³ The hacenderos did not usually permit anything equivalent to leases for five or six years; the few that were tolerated depended entirely upon the caprice of the lords or of the administrators.

The owners of estates only cultivated the best land and assigned the rest for the raising of cattle; thus each hacienda had a certain individual form which this division produced. The proprietors did not have the means to plant more than half, one-third, or one-fourth part of their haciendas; therefore at least one-third or one-fourth of the land was uncultivated, not including what was in pasture for their cattle. Some estates were so large that they could not be planted and administered by one owner. On the other hand, some owners had a business from which to earn their livelihood, consequently they made little attempt to cultivate their lands which went three or four years without being planted. Again there were proprietors who did plant all or the greater part of their lands, but they did not reap the full benefits from them because they could not harvest half of the crops. Nicolás Vicente de Guadarrama believed that if the farmers were treated like the mine owners they would not cease to cultivate their estates, for according to the Ordinance of Mining, if owners did not work their mines for four months they might be denounced to the territorial deputation, which would judge whether the possessions should be taken away from them. Guadarrama suggested that the same method be applied to lands which were not cultivated for one, two, or more years, or fine the owners, so that agriculture might be increased and the poor maintained because of the more abundant products.⁴⁴

There was frequent recourse to the Pious Funds to de-

⁴²Queipo, "Representación á nombre de los labradores y comerciantes de Michoacán . . ." Valladolid, Oct. 24, 1805. *In Mora*, I, 87.

⁴³*Ensayo político sobre Nueva España*, II, 9.

⁴⁴Nicolás Vicente de Guadarrama al ministro universal. Toluca, Oct. 19, 1797, AGI, 1781 (91-6-16). Audiencia de Méjico.

velop the ten thousand large estates which constituted half of the agricultural land of the kingdom, and the urban estates. When the government tried to take over those funds there was great alarm in the country for fear that twenty-five or thirty thousand of the most distinguished families would be ruined. Abad Queipo said "They see with grief that their haciendas, falling into the hands of greedy receivers who devour them as locusts, are ruined sooner or later, without hopes of ever recovering them." The bishop showed that without the aid of the Pious Funds the estates soon remained uncultivated and could not be sold at a profit. Their owners and their families, the operators and all other dependents of agriculture remained without occupation or subsistence. It often happened at the death of the father, who left only 40,000 or 60,000 pesos to one of his sons, that none of his children could remain on the estate because of lack of funds for its development. He maintained that as a result the general revenue with which all society was fed and supported would necessarily be reduced the first year one-fourth and the second one-half, all branches of the treasury would suffer the same reduction, and there would occur prostitution, robbery, hunger, pestilence, and all kinds of misfortunes.⁴⁶ The prudent ecclesiastic ably sums up the causes for the backwardness of agriculture:

"The indivisibility of the haciendas, the difficulty of their management and the lack of property among the people produced and still produce every evil effect for agriculture, to the population, and to the state in general; for agriculture on account of the imperfection and increased costs of cultivation, and much more because of the little consumption of its products and the scarcity and misery of the consumers; to the people because they were deprived of the means of subsistence; to the state

⁴⁶"Representación á nombre de los labradores y comerciantes de Michoacán . . ." Valladolid, Oct. 24, 1805. *In* Mora, I, 87, 84-85, 92.

in general because it resulted and still results from this system of things that the people were divided into two classes—Indians and castes—the first surrounded by some privileges of protection which soon became useless, the other class, descendants from slaves, carried with it the mark of servitude and infamy which made it perpetually subject to tribute. Such a people generally scattered in the mountains and ravines cannot have activity, energy, [good] customs or instruction.”

As farmers they would work badly and be robbed, as it ordinarily happened, and the effects upon agriculture would be ruinous.⁴⁶

The tithe and the alcabala were also heavy burdens upon agriculture and injurious to the farmers. In times of scarcity when the products were not equivalent to the cost of raising them, those dues were demanded just the same, thereby consuming the capital of cultivators. The church and the king obtained the benefits from those contributions which helped to ruin agriculturists. Bishop Queipo asserted that agriculture suffered because the people might not employ the land in the most profitable uses, on account of the great privileges of the *mesta* or grazers' gild, because of the abuses of justices, fiscal dues on goods that had no known owner, the disorder of beasts of burden which trampled on the people, from the resentments, vengeance, and thefts of the commissaries and chiefs of the tribunal of *La Acordada*, from the monopolies of meat in the towns and cities, from the excessive contribution of two reales on each head of cattle in the kingdom for the drainage of Huehuetoca, and on account of the taxes on grocery stores—a very unwise provision—since consumption was reduced thereby. Agriculture was harmed because owners of estates had to pay in advance the tributes, parochial dues, and other impositions upon farmers; this often required one-twentieth of their income. It also suffered be-

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, I, 87-88.

cause operators were excused from work so frequently for many causes, from the continual lawsuits about boundaries of estates, and from the calling of the cases to the capital, with the almost inevitable ruin of the litigants. The shrewd Queipo thought that agriculture suffered almost without hope on account of the privileges of the treasury and its indiscreet agents, and the lack of hard cash.⁴⁷

In 1800 Victoriano Cantón reported from Yucatan that the subdelegate ad interim of the partido of Tihosuco demanded from agricultural laborers ten reales on each one hundred *mecates* of land sowed with maize and twelve pesos four reales on a like number of *mecates* planted with sugar cane. The treasury officials of the province believed that three per cent should be exacted on all the products of leased land and the intendendant favored the project. Cantón showed the inconveniences which would result to agriculture and finally to the royal treasury from such innovations.⁴⁸

The cost of living for farmers was higher in Mexico than in Spain. Queipo said that almost all the farmers in the former country had difficulty to support their families and cultivate their haciendas for two, three, or four years since the price of products was so low; meantime they had to draw upon their capital and were under obligations to merchants and other creditors. They were forced to sell their farm products at a low price and buy upon trust the articles necessary for their maintenance.⁴⁹ In Spain the small principal of 4000 or 6000 reales sterling invested in an oil or vinegar shop was sufficient to keep a married couple and to educate their children, but in Mexico this could not be done. Likewise in the peninsula ten or twelve *fanegas* of sowing land valued at 20,000 or 30,000 reales, or 200 or 300 pesos income, could support a family in

⁴⁷"Representación á nombre de los labradores y comerciantes de Michoacán . . ." Valladolid, Oct. 24, 1805. In Mora, I, 88-91.

⁴⁸Consulta del consejo de 27 de Mayo de 1801. Num. 32, AGI, 1783 (91-6-18). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴⁹"Escrito presentado á D. Sisto Espinosa del consejo de estado . . ." Madrid, 1807. In Mora, I, 108.

decency and give one or two children a career in letters or arms, however in America this could not be done with an hacienda worth 20,000 pesos.⁵⁰

The treatment of agricultural laborers on the large estates was not always what it should have been. Although they were better off than factory workers, there was plenty of need for improvement. In 1788 various complaints were sent to the Council of the Indies relative to the treatment of Indian day laborers on the haciendas of Tepeaca, Atlixco, Tlaxcala, Huejotzingo, and others. The owners of the estates did not adjust their accounts properly, and they had to work longer than from sunrise to sunset, a violation of royal orders. They were punished excessively with lashes, blows, imprisonment, being locked up and also their wives, and were deprived of their wages for the slightest mistakes. They were forced to buy their articles of necessity in the stores on the hacienda at excessive prices when they could have obtained them much cheaper in the neighboring towns; thus they fell into peonage, were always under obligation to the owners because of debt, and their position became that of semi-slavery.⁵¹

In Mexico there were some powerful individuals who made their wealth from agriculture and had an annual income of 200,000 pesos. The first count of Regla founded three entailed estates—his earldom and two marquisates for two sons; while the two other sons each had a property valued at more than 700,000 pesos. Among the great proprietors may be counted the descendants of Cortés. The house of Terranova, styled the marquisate of the Valley of Oaxaca, appointed and paid a complete tribunal, consisting of a governor and an assessor. The salary of the governor was 5000 pesos, thus some idea may be formed of the wealth of the family. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the duke of Monte León, a Neo-

⁵⁰Queipo, "Representación á nombre de los labradores y comerciantes de Michoacán . . ." Valladolid, Oct. 24, 1805, *ibid.*, I, 77-78.

⁵¹Representación de Dn. Francisco Machado. Madrid, Feb. 18, 1788, AGI, 1739 (91-5-2). Audiencia de Méjico.

politan lord, possessed the family estate of Cortés, consisting of excellent lands in the province of Oaxaca near Toluca and in Cuernavaca. It only produced however 110,000 pesos a year, since the king had taken away from the family the right to collect the alcabala and dues on tobacco, and the expenses of administration exceeded 25,000 pesos. Humboldt believed that if the later descendants of the great conqueror had lived in New Spain the revenues from the estate would have been over 300,000 pesos annually.⁶² Near Guadalajara was the celebrated estate of the marquis of Altamira. It was about forty leagues in extent and it sent annually to Mexico City three or four thousand beeves. The hacienda produced much wheat and pepper and raised numerous flocks of sheep and swine, but good markets were lacking. Under favorable conditions the estate could have yielded 40,000 pesos a year. The division of land in Mexico was far more unequal than in Spain, since some of the estates in the colony were as large as provinces or kingdoms in the home country.⁶³

Viceroy Marquina gave account to the Council of the Indies in 1802 concerning the immoderate accumulation of unappropriated lands in New Spain. Josef Ignacio Treviño and others had leased twenty square leagues in the town of Mier of Nuevo Santander to raise cattle. The civil fiscal of the treasury, Francisco Xavier Borbon, noticed from the various expedientes which came to him that large holdings of unoccupied lands were alienated for a small price, to the injury of the treasury and the settlement of the regions. Forty or fifty cattle ranches, the size of a kingdom, could be leased for less than one hundred pesos. As a remedy he suggested that the governors of Nuevo Santander, Nuevo León, Coahuila, and Texas should suspend the approval of the leases that had not been con-

⁶²*Ensayo político sobre Nueva España*, I, 243, 245-246; Pinkerton, III, 206.

⁶³Pinkerton, III, 235-236.

firmed, but which were still pending. The Board of Finance agreed to this measure and the governors of the Provincias Internas were told to limit favors relative to lands and keep in mind the necessity of populating them, since the provinces of Nuevo Santander and Monterrey only had ranches and the commanders were continually exposed to the raids of barbarous Indians. The estate of Josef Ignacio Treviño alone included twenty square leagues and he pretended to make himself owner of it for fifty pesos. It was thought that lands which had water and were fertile should be leased for more than poor ones. An extraordinary junta held at San Luis Potosí added that not more than thirty square leagues should be sold to the rich, since that was sufficient for an hacienda, and to the poor eight or ten, under the condition that they be populated within a year. If those terms were not complied with, the lands were to be incorporated in the crown. The tribunal of accounts believed that the governors might sell the lands with the approval of the junta superior. There was disagreement about the measures to be taken with those who already had large estates. The ministers of the treasury were of the opinion that lands which had been confirmed could not be taken away from the holders, but only those which had been usurped. The members of the principal accounting house declared that the possessors of lands could be forced to sell them to others because of the low price for which they had bought them and they desired that the time for selling them should be two years. All agreed that lands without titles should be investigated at once.⁶⁴

In 1806 the consulado of Vera Cruz complained of the excess number of large proprietors in its district and of the need of commons for the city. The Board of Finance considered the matter and sympathized with the organization of merchants, declaring that the treasury as well as the people had suffered from the large estates. The junta

⁶⁴Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, Nov. 1804, AGI, 1150 (88-1-14). Audiencia de Méjico.

superior, therefore, asked that the governors of the Provincias Internas should be permitted to sell the unoccupied lands in their regions.⁵⁵ Some hacendados still possessed estates of one hundred, two hundred, three hundred, and four hundred square leagues in 1815, to the grave injury of the common people and to the state in general, since they hindered increased production. In the interior of Mexico there were no more unoccupied lands to distribute to poor Spaniards, the Indians, free mulattoes, and other castes, who had to be employed as peons on the lands of wealthy individuals—the land grabbers of the country. It was advised that owners of large holdings should be compelled to cultivate the useful portions and if they were not farmed within one year they should be classified as unoccupied lands and assigned to needy people.⁵⁶

An interesting picture of agricultural conditions in Mexico at the beginning of the nineteenth century is given by Juan Cruz. Agriculture in Nueva Galicia had made little advancement in spite of the efforts of the king and of the good ecclesiastic to promote it. It remained unprogressive because the inhabitants were ignorant of the cultivation of useful plants. They only cared for wheat, maize, and beans, neglecting to raise cotton, sugar, cacao, indigo, cochineal, dye woods, and other products which would have been very useful for the lands. The sagacious bishop showed that other lands were adapted to silk, hemp, and flax raising; therefore he thought that instruction in the cultivation of those products should be provided and rewards offered for those of excellent quality as he had done in the case of indigo and cacao. But it frequently happened that the inhabitants were prohibited to make use of their lands for the purposes for which they were best

⁵⁵Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, March 17, 1806, AGI, 1142 (83-1-5). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁵⁶Expediente sobre erección de obispado, y seminario conciliar en la ciudad de San Luis Potosí, habitación de un puerto de mar, repartimiento de tierras, y libertad de fabricas. 1815, AGI, 1902 (92-5-10). Audiencia de Méjico.

suited. This was why Compostela and its environs were in such a wretched condition. The ecclesiastic maintained that they would prosper with one single favor—the permission to cultivate tobacco the same as the towns of Córdoba and Orizaba. By such a measure tobacco consumption would be increased and the expense of transportation to the borders of Sonora and Nueva Vizcaya be decreased because Compostela was nearer to those provinces. The concession would cause the population to grow and make places on the south coast flourish; those regions could hardly subsist because they had to depend upon the products which were distributed at the same time as the subsidy from the dockyards of San Blas. The good man advised that cotton should be encouraged in the warm lands and wool growing in the cold lands.⁵⁷ He believed that every effort should be made to increase the population so that the products of agriculture and manufacture might be consumed, but the great proprietors hindered farming since they had so much land which they did not wish to cultivate or make useful. He therefore requested that the state should take a hand in the matter, distribute the lands, compel the proprietors to contribute to the public welfare by leasing their lands, and fix a limit for the acquisition of uncultivated land.⁵⁸ Good roads were very necessary for the advancement of agriculture so that products might be transferred from one place to another. Cruz thought that poor roads were one of the most powerful causes for the misery of the people and by overcoming them he “firmly believed that the farmer would increase his sowings, the cattle raiser his cattle, the artisan his manufactures, the consumers obtaining better and more abundant provisions for all the needs of human life.”⁵⁹

One of the chief aims of the revolutions was to divide

⁵⁷Juan Cruz to the king, Guadalajara, Jan. 17, 1805. AGI, 104-7-17 (Audiencia de Guadalajara), pp. 25-26. BL.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 20, 22-23.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 26-27.

the lands into small portions to promote agriculture.⁶⁰ At the time of Hidalgo's insurrection Queipo said that two-thirds of the lands belonged to the Spanish-Americans, among whom there were a few unmarried European men who did not have any descendants, and the other one-third the Indians and the castes possessed. He asked whether the Indians who occupied one-sixth of the land should despoil the other people of their holdings. The bishop thought that when Hidalgo told the natives that they were to be the owners of the lands it simply put into their hearts the furor of vengeance, and it would cause the Spaniards and castes to unite to exterminate the Indians. This was sufficient to cause civil war among all the sons of the country.⁶¹

When independence was won agriculture was one of the first industries that promised great profit under a free government. There still existed however many things to hinder its progress. The population did not increase during the revolutions, capital decreased and disappeared, communication was cut off between Puebla and Vera Cruz, flour was brought into the country from New Orleans, and a pestilence wrought devastation—these were some of the conditions which caused a great loss to agriculture. Some men declared that the ecclesiastical tithes, the crude instruments of labor, and poor roads impoverished agriculture.⁶²

Cattle raising was an important industry in New Spain, especially on the vast plains of the Provincias Internas, along the east coast, and on the table lands of the interior. The intendency of Durango supplied meat for the capital and the large towns nearby. The natives did not use much butter, milk, and cheese, but the mestizos were very fond

⁶⁰"Informe dado por el establecimiento de minería a la comisión de industria del congreso general." Mexico, 1836. In *Papeles varios*, 101, num. 6, pp. 9-10.

⁶¹"A todos los habitantes [de Micoacán] . . ." Valladolid, Oct. 8, 1810. In *Papeles varios*, 21, num. 2, pp. 2-5.

⁶²Estevan de Antuñano, "Discurso analítico de algunos puntos de moral y economía política de Mejico . . ." Puebla, 1834, *ibid.*, 61, num. 3, pp. 9-26.

of the latter article and it formed an important commodity for internal commerce. In 1802 the annual value of tanned leather was estimated at 419,000 pesos, however at that time not very much was exported. Some families had 30,000 to 40,000 heads of cattle on their large ranches. The exportation of horses for Natchez and New Orleans was considerable each year. Mules were employed as beasts of burden in the country, Vera Cruz using 70,000 and Mexico City more than 5000. Humboldt said that sheep raising had been badly neglected in New Spain as in all the colonies, and that the best wool was produced in the intendancy of Valladolid.⁶³ Wool grawing was unprogressive and wasteful because the proper methods and implements for shearing sheep were unknown.⁶⁴ More advancement was made in the wool industry on the mission lands and in the distant frontier provinces.

Manufacture was rather limited because it had been prohibited or restricted for so long in Mexico. The discerning Abad Queipo declared that this industry was not sufficient to dress and shoe one-third of the inhabitants.⁶⁵ The manufacture of cotton textiles was forbidden by the peninsular commerce, yet the shops in Mexico abounded with them and everybody knew that they were contraband because that which came registered could not begin to supply one-tenth of the consumers. The consulado of Cádiz calculated the clandestine business in textiles at 60,000,000 pesos annually in the nineteenth century.⁶⁶ The custom had been to permit in the colonies only safe industries which would not compete with those of Spain.

Bernardo Ward, while he had many liberal ideas, also believed in this policy. He said that it would not be possible for Spain to furnish half the supplies needed in the

⁶³*Ensayo político sobre Nueva España*, II, 399-402.

⁶⁴Villarreal, *Enfermedades políticas* . . . MS, III, pt. IV, pp. 22-23. BL.

⁶⁵"Representación á nombre de los labradores y comerciantes de Michoacán . . ." Valladolid, Oct. 24, 1805. *In* Mora, I, 87.

⁶⁶Representación de Pedro del Paso y Troncoso, prior del consulado de Vera Cruz. *In* *Diario del gobierno de la Habana*. Lunes 31 de Enero de 1820, num. 31, AGI, 1678 (91-2-12). Audiencia de Méjico.

dependencies for many years. He asked whether it would be best to let foreigners, who some day might become enemies of Spain, provide what was needed or let the Indian vassals do it. On the other hand, he too thought that industries of wool, silk, and fine linen should not be allowed in Mexico because Spain had excellent manufactories of those goods; but all articles which had to come from foreign nations, which the peninsula did not have, and those for which there was such a great demand that Spain could not supply them, should be permitted in the colonies. The keen minister had no use for negro slavery, since it deprived the natives of work; then too, if it were abolished there would be less pretext for illicit commerce. Ward even approved of the labor of women in cotton, hemp, and flax manufactories. He thought that Indian women would be very useful in making large quantities of thread which could be sent to Spain for its textile factories. Industries were to be free from tribute as in England. It was suggested, as a means to promote industry and commerce, that all the people in America should be compelled to dress like Europeans, from the caciques to the humblest Indian. Ward said that if this could be made one of the requirements for land holding and for preferment to office, the people would take pride in their Spanish clothes and would adopt them voluntarily since they gave them distinction; the Spaniards who despised the Indians would feel that they were more their equals.⁶⁷

The great Revillagigedo did try to make the people wear clothes. He started his reform with the *cargadores* of the customhouse, the operators of the mint, and workers in the royal factory of cigars, because when the common people bought clothes they had less money for drunkenness and vice. Viceroy Branciforte extended the measure of his predecessor to include the workers of the cigar factories of Vera Cruz, Guadalajara, Querétaro, Orizaba, and the people on the road from Vera Cruz to the capital.

⁶⁷*Proyecto económico* . . . 264-269.

Azanza also took a hand in the matter; he provided that the gilds, brotherhoods, cigar factories, cabildos and juntas of Indians should not admit persons who were not decently dressed. Only individuals wrapped in blankets and *zarapes* were to be permitted to enter the palace, the *paseos*, streets, and solemn functions of the church, under the penalty of eight days in prison.⁶⁸ Whether those measures helped manufacture very much it is difficult to know, but it is certain that the nudeness of the proletariat did not entirely disappear.

Antonio de San José Muro had some wise ideas in regard to manufacture in New Spain. He said that Europe introduced into that colony one thousand one hundred and forty-seven articles, Spain making very few of them. Some others were partly worked by Spain, but many more were brought and sold by foreigners. Muro believed that foreign importation was the most terrible enemy of a country and that every foreign nation should be regarded as an enemy; therefore he advocated colonial manufacture of goods which Spain could not supply. He thought that spinning was the most perfect and least expensive manufacture for dependencies; it would give employment to the idle and to the fleets; and it would make thread cheaper for national manufactures, thereby giving them an advantage over foreigners. The gentleman asserted that it was necessary to allow in Mexico the manufacture of goods not made in Spain, for a policy to the contrary would ruin the crops and the treasury. In the Provincias Internas many millions of arrobas of wool could be collected and it was fitting that some of it should be sent to Spain for the manufacture of fine cloth, however factories for ordinary coarse cloth for the needs of the people should be

⁶⁸Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, Aug. 6, 1800. AGI, 1139 (88-1-2). Audiencia de Méjico; Branciforte dá cuenta de las providencias que há tomado, para evitar la desnudéz de los operarios de ambos sexos de las fabricas de tabaco de aquel reyno. Mexico, Feb. 28, 1795, *ibid.*

permitted in New Spain, and the treasury would reap advantages from this.⁶⁹

The promotion of manufacture was occasionally advocated by viceroys for the good of the country. The second Velasco and the great Revillagigedo were staunch supporters of colonial industries and they had much success in their inauguration. The latter gentleman advised that new branches of commerce might be created by the encouragement and exportation of raw materials and the handiwork of natives; he also desired that the Indians should be taught spinning.⁷⁰ In 1791 Revillagigedo asked the king to grant the free manufacture and consumption of whisky of sugar cane, since capable doctors had pronounced it to be healthier than the liquors of Spain. He showed that this would not injure Spanish commerce, for Spanish merchants had stated in a junta held in Jalapa that they could only furnish liquor for half of the provinces of New Spain for a third of the year. The viceroy said that if all the peninsula were converted into vineyards it could not supply enough wine for its colonies. He believed that the measure would be a means to check contraband liquors.⁷¹

Industry was aided by the monopolistic system of commerce, especially in the interior of the country because it was very difficult to obtain foreign products and they were very high in price. Some manufactories were established, but they were not very successful because of the constant interruption of communication and the lack of experience in industry.⁷² Juan López Concelada said that the wars with England helped to increase manufacturing in New Spain. With the coasts of the Gulf of Mexico blockaded, goods could not be brought into the country by way of

⁶⁹Proyecto del Antonio de San José Muro. Mexico, April 16, 1787, AGI, 1879 (92-4-3). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁷⁰Velasco to the king. Feb. 25, 1593, AGI, cap. 1, 58-3-11. Audiencia de Méjico BL; Riva Palacio, II, 448; Revillagigedo, *Instrucción reservada*, arts. 374-377.

⁷¹Conde de Lerena to the king. Mexico, Sept. 26, 1791, num. 540 reservada. Archivo General de Mexico. BL.

⁷²Riva Palacio, II, 891.

Vera Cruz; and, when the ships from the Philippines did not arrive, the people began to make things for themselves, imitating the linens of China. Hat manufacture sprang up in all parts of the country, for necessity has always been the mother of invention. Cancelada avowed that every day Mexico became more expert in making fine hats. Furniture too had to be manufactured and the glazed earthenware of Puebla progressed. At the same time contraband articles were introduced in a scandalous manner and the creoles were asking for free commerce.⁷³ During the alliance against England at the time of the French Revolution, the Spanish monarch learned that thick silk cords, gauze, silk veils like those of Malaga, taffeta silk, double, single, and lustrous, very fine handkerchiefs, and silk interwoven with gold and silver were made in Mexico, therefore he ordered the viceroy to check an abuse so contrary to the laws and commerce of the nation. The production was not stopped for again in 1800 Viceroy Azanza reported that there was an extraordinary increase in silk manufacture and again the royal command went forth to stop it.⁷⁴

On the other hand, all kinds of industry was hindered by the great variety of weights and measures in the country. As late as 1803 there was no regulation for them except what each buyer or seller wished, and this caused endless confusion.⁷⁵

The manufacture of linen was considered safe for the colonies because Spain did not produce enough of the fabric to export. It was believed that the Indians would be able to make linen cloth, since they could weave blankets and crude cotton textiles.⁷⁶ In spite of the many attempts to

⁷³"Ruina de la Nueva España si se declara el comercio libre con los extranjeros." Cádiz, 1811. In *Papeles varios*, 215, num. 2, pp. 23-57.

⁷⁴Ministro universal al virey. San Lorenzo, Nov. 28, 1800, AGI, 2372 (95-3-22). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁷⁵Antonio de Argumedo al consejo de Indias. Huejutla, Dec. 20, 1803, num. 36, AGI, 1790 (91-6-25). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁷⁶*Documentos inéditos . . . de Indias*, XXIII, 532.

promote this industry, at the eve of the nineteenth century there was no manufacture of linen.⁷⁷

The city of Puebla was one of the chief manufacturing centers in Mexico; it was noted for its cloth factories, of which there were forty-three in 1794. The city had been famous for its manufacture of beautiful glazed earthenware and hats. Those industries flourished when the communication between Puebla and Lima was maintained, but by the nineteenth century glass and porcelain were being imported from Europe, since only sixteen factories for glazed ware and two for glass remained out of the forty-six which the city had earlier. Puebla also made blankets and silk, cotton, and woolen fabrics. In time of peace the cotton factories of this city alone caused an internal trade valued at 1,500,000 pesos annually,⁷⁸ and employed more than twelve hundred weavers.⁷⁹ The intendancy of Guadalajara furnished the cotton and wool for the factories of Puebla, Querétaro, San Miguel el Grande, and for its own manufacturing town of Lagos and a few others.⁸⁰

Querétaro was also noted for its cloth manufactories, and the yearly value of its textiles exceeded 600,000 pesos. Humboldt visited a factory of cigarettes and cigars at Querétaro which employed 3000 day workers, among whom there were 1900 women; the annual output of this establishment was 2,200,000 pesos. The rooms were clean, but small, warm, and badly ventilated.⁸¹ In the intendancy of Oaxaca there were two factories of indigo and five hundred looms for *rebosos* of cotton and seven for silk. Valladolid had thirty-four manufactories of coarse woolen materials, light weight cloth, and blankets; also many looms for weaving existed in the intendancy of Guanajuato.⁸² In Puebla, Mexico City, and Guadalajara the fac-

⁷⁷Humboldt, IV, 10.

⁷⁸Revillagigedo, *Instrucción reservada*, art. 367; Humboldt, IV, 13, 6.

⁷⁹Pinkerton, III, 201.

⁸⁰Humboldt, IV, 6.

⁸¹Humboldt, IV, 8, 11.

⁸²Revillagigedo, *Instrucción reservada*, art. 367.

tories of hard soap did a thriving business.⁸³ Mexico City also had cigar factories which employed 5000 persons.⁸⁴ The paper used for wrapping cigarettes and cigars came from Spain and when there was a scarcity of it, because of wars or some other misfortune, the factories had to be closed.⁸⁵ The manufacture of powder was a government monopoly, but the only royal factory was in Santa Fé three leagues from the capital; in 1801 it produced 786,000 pounds of powder. There was a great deal of contraband powder in the country which was much cheaper than that obtained in the legal manner, therefore Humboldt believed that the price should be decreased and the trade in this commodity should be entirely free.⁸⁶ Ordinarily the total manufacture of Mexico was estimated at 7,000,000 or 8,000,000 pesos a year; of this amount 1,240,000 pesos were produced from the tobacco industry. Humboldt said that the total profit from manufacture was 3,993,834 pesos in 1801, and in 1802 it increased to 4,092,962 pesos.⁸⁷

Methods of manufacture and labor conditions had always been very bad during the whole colonial period and they were not improved in the first years of the nineteenth century. Little attention was paid to sanitation, hence the workers were unhealthy. Free men, Indians, negroes, and criminals, whom the justices distributed in the factories, all worked together in the same room. They were half naked,

⁸³Humboldt, IV, 11.

⁸⁴Pinkerton, *op. cit.*, III, 201.

⁸⁵Marquina to Miguel Cayetano Soler. Mexico, July 27, 1801, num. 342. AGI, 1155 (88-1-19). Audiencia de Méjico. In 1812 Mexico City and Guadalupe produced 12,068 cigars, in 1813 only 6,704, in 1814 the factories made 10,367, and 11,576 in 1815. Estado que demuestra las labores de puros y cigarros que se hicieron en las fabricas de México y Guadalupe en los años de 1812, 13, 14, y 15, num. 9, AGI, 1830 (92-1-16). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁸⁶*Ensayo político sobre Nueva España*, IV, 13-14.

⁸⁷*Ibid.*, IV, 6, 10-11. José María Quirós gave 61,011,818 pesos as the annual industrial production of New Spain before the revolutions began, and in those figures he excluded agriculture and mining. Estado general de los productos anuales de la agricultura, industria, artes y minerales de Nueva España en la época anterior á sus comociones intestinas. In Memoria de Estatuto. Vera Cruz, Jan. 15, 1817, AGI, 2518 (96-3-3). Audiencia de Méjico.

covered with rags, lank, and disfigured. Each workshop seemed like a prison, since the doors were double and constantly locked to prevent the workers from going out on the streets. Only those who were married were permitted to see their families on Sundays. All were punished very severely if they made the least mistake or violated the established rules of the factory. Humboldt said that it was not easy to conceive how the owners of workshops could treat free men in such a manner and how the Indians and day laborers could stand the same treatment as galley slaves. Day laborers were scarce, therefore the manufacturers caught those who were most miserable among the natives but who showed inclination to work. A small amount of money was advanced to them, which was spent in a few days in drunkenness. The Indians then became debtors to the owners of manufactories, who locked them in the factories under the pretext of making them pay their debts. The wages were only one and one-half reales a day and they were paid in food, whisky, and clothes, on which the manufacturers gained fifty or sixty per cent. In this manner the most laborious worker was always in debt and he was treated as a slave.⁸⁸

What transpired in one of the *obrajes* or workshops in Peru is truthfully depicted by the noted travelers, Juan and Ulloa, and the same description is true for Mexico. The labor of the factory began before the day dawned, at which time every Indian took his place at the piece of cloth that was being woven and the tasks of the day were distributed. When this was done the owner closed the door and the workers were locked in the building as prisoners. At midday the door was opened for the women to go in with their scanty allowance of food, which was soon partaken, and the doors were locked again. When the darkness of night no longer permitted labor, the owner went around to gather up the work. Those who had not been

⁸⁸Croix, Instrucción que . . . dejó, AGI, 88-5-13. BL; Humboldt, IV, 8-10.

able to finish their tasks, in spite of apologies or reasonings, were punished with indescribable cruelty. The unfeeling owners as if transformed into merciless savages, inflicted upon the wretched Indians lashes by the hundreds and to complete the punishment they sent them to that part of the building reserved for fetters and instruments of torture where they were punished like the most wretched slaves. Those found delinquent during the day by the overseer were chastised with a whip at once, and also reserved for later punishment. All the mistakes were noted and charged to the account of the laborer, thus from year to year they became more deeply in debt.⁸⁰

Workshops were too frequently regarded as convenient places to which criminals might be sent for punishment, without any cost to the state. The owners of the bakeries, butcher shops, and manufactories who took the criminals pretended to pay the costs for keeping them and the salaries of the judges of the criminal chamber. Conditions got so intolerable and there were so many complaints made by the bakers and the criminals themselves that an investigation was made during the administration of Viceroy Croix. Visitor Gálvez and many of the high functionaries decided that the practice could not justly be permitted; therefore provision was made to send criminals to the presidios of Havana and San Juan de Ulloa and justices were to punish them according to their crimes. The criminal chamber of the audiencia soon reported the injuries which resulted for the administration of justice from this measure, since there was a lack of funds with which to pay the salaries of inferior officials and for other expenses. Then Viceroy Croix examined the causes for the establishment of the *colleras* and found that the injury was in the bad use of them which needed a remedy. "A leader was appointed over a gang of those criminals, which was called the collera. He led them through the cities and towns of the kingdom where the workshops were situated, forcing their

⁸⁰*Noticias secretas de America*, 276-277.

owners to buy them and collecting a certain amount if any owner, on account of not wishing to take such offenders, refused to receive them." The viceroy recognized that conditions were too unsatisfactory to permit the colleras and he continued to send criminals to penitentiaries and public works as in Spain. The criminal judges still complained about the innovation during the administration of Bucareli. They maintained that the prisons were bad, that there were not sufficient minor officials, and that salaries were too low. Hence they saw no harm in the assignment of one or two criminals to each of the many workshops that existed outside of the capital; part of their salary could go to their wives and children and the rest might be applied to the criminal chamber for the payment of salaries. Bucareli allowed criminals to be assigned temporarily to the bakeries, butcher shops, and wool shops of the capital until they could be sent to the presidios or forced to clean the streets. One-half real was imposed on each *carga* (load) of pulque that entered the city to provide funds for the criminal chamber.⁹⁰

On July 8, 1805, Viceroy Iturrigaray issued a proclamation which definitely regulated the workshops in Mexico. The ordinary justices of the country were not to assign criminals to workshops for punishment under any condition; the owners of such establishments were not to admit any criminals and if any tribunal sent them they were to report immediately to the superior government. Part or all of the wages had to be paid every day in silver and the remaining amount at the end of the week so that the worker would be perfectly free to buy what he wished and needed, only one-third part of the day's wage might be advanced to the Indians, servants, or to the poor to pay tribute and legitimate expenses, servants were to be freed from the payment of what they owed to owners of workshops after the *bando* was published, the workers were not

⁹⁰Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, April 25, 1798, AGI, 1139 (88-1-2). Audiencia de Méjico; Croix, Instrucción que . . . dejó, AGI, 88-5-13. BL.

to be forced to take, against their will, tasks for which they had not bargained, laborers were to come to work when it was daylight and might not work at night. They were to have one-half hour for breakfast and two hours at midday, and no owner of a shop might solicit a worker without first investigating whether he was serving another or owed any money. Laborers were not to be permitted to play games on work days, owners of workshops might not keep pulque shops, taverns, or wine shops unless the justices said that there was no inconvenience to have them outside of the buildings, and factories were not to have the doors locked, but there might be a portero at the door who could prevent servants from going out without a good cause during the hours of work. No justice might send an apprentice to a workshop without the consent of his parents and he had to be given an instructor to teach him the trade. Pupils and orphans were to be treated like other workers and apprentices, each establishment had to keep a book in which the exact date when the workers entered it had to be put down, if some worker committed a crime the owner and overseer were not to punish him, but they had to report the matter at once to the justices, and the former ordinances of Luis Velasco were to remain in force—these were the principal provisions of the proclamation.⁶¹

There was much prejudice against women in industry in Mexico, and even to-day it has not been completely overcome. Occasionally special permission was granted for certain women to take a leading part in industry; for example, a royal decree of September 2, 1784, allowed Doña María Castejón, an inhabitant of Córdoba, to administer by herself and in her own name a thread factory, without dependence on a master who was examined by the gild.⁶²

⁶¹Bando del Señor Josef de Iturrigaray. Mexico, July 8, 1805, AGI, 1809 (91-7-19). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁶²Expediente del virrey de Nueva España dando cuenta del bando que mandó publicar permitiendo á las mujeres ocuparse en labores y manufacturas . . . Mexico, Nov. 11, 1799, num. 9, AGI, 1314 (89-1-12). Audiencia de Méjico.

On July 22, 1798, Josefa Celis, a widow of Mexico City, burdened with the support of her children and without subsistence, appealed to Viceroy Azanza to be permitted freely to embroider shoes and sell them. The guilds had hindered her in this work, declaring that some women sold embroidered shoes with false spangles and embroidery twist, to the injury of the public and contrary to their ordinances. In a proclamation of the same day, the viceroy ordered that Doña Josefa or any other woman might continue the industry of embroidering shoes or engage in any work or manufactures suitable to them and their strength. The regidor judge of the guilds complied with the decree of the executive and he thought that, although the proclamation did not harmonize entirely with the ordinance of the guilds, it could be tolerated and women might embroider and do other light work.⁹³ Viceroy Azanza thought that if women worked in factories there would be a greater number of men for the hard work of the fields and other fatiguing labor; also it would be a means to increase the industry of manufacture. The bando prohibited men to work in the houses where women labored or to direct their work. Women in industry were to be subject to the inspection of alcaldes and overseers so that the public would not be prejudiced against their work or there would be no injury because of the poor quality of materials. The Council of the Indies greatly favored the viceroy's proclamation and believed that copies of it should be sent to the chief executives of Lima, Buenos Aires, and Santa Fé.⁹⁴ In the proclamation issued by Viceroy Iturrigaray in 1805 women were to be allowed to work freely; they might come to work one-half hour later than men and leave one-half

⁹³Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, Nov. 19, 1799, AGI, 1139 (88-1-2). Audiencia de Méjico; Azanza, Instrucción sobre las provincias de la Nueva España; dada por el Exmo. Sr. D. José de Azanza á su sucesor . . . á 29 de Abril de 1800, num. 17, pp. 58-59. Archivo General de Mexico. BL.

⁹⁴Expediente del virrey de Nueva España dando cuenta del bando que mandó publicar permitiendo á las mujeres ocuparse en labores y manufacturas . . . Nov. 11, 1799, num. 9, AGI, 1314 (89-1-12). Audiencia de Méjico.

hour earlier and they were to carry on their labor in separate rooms.⁸⁵

Some far-seeing individuals, like Díaz de Salcedo, Antonio de Argumedo, Abad Queipo, Juan Cruz, José Vivero, and others who were imbued with the new economic ideas, stood for the development of home industries and industrial reform. The first gentleman, who was the intendant of San Luis Potosí, showed how badly workshops and textile manufactories were needed in his intendency, but there was no one patriotic enough to relieve and encourage the poor and advance funds for such projects. It seems that no societies or organizations could be established in his province to promote industries.⁸⁶ Antonio de Argumedo said that the manufacture of all merchandise which came from foreign countries should be promoted to the highest degree, freeing it from dues and gradually raising those of foreigners. Colonial manufacturers should be protected and honored by freedom from duties, since Great Britain was willing to lower prices and sell at a loss in order to destroy Spanish manufactures. He believed that linen should be manufactured in Mexico and an effort be made to attain the same perfection as in Spain; also textiles of wool, thin cloths, cashmere, and fine stockings should be allowed and a factory be assigned to each place where it could best be erected. Argumedo desired especially that the watch industry should be encouraged because it was a rare thing to see Spanish watches in America, for they were almost all of foreign make. Likewise he thought that comestibles, as the butter and cheese of Flanders and other things of that kind, should be made and taste acquired for them. He stated that foreigners who were Catholics wanted to establish themselves in the dependencies in order to teach Spanish children the industrial arts, but this should be strictly prohibited, since there would

⁸⁵Bando del Señor Josef de Iturrigaray. Mexico, July 8, 1805, AGI, 1809 (91-7-19). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁸⁶Díaz de Salcedo á Revilla Gigedo. San Luis Potosí, Dec. 4, 1792, AGI, 89-6-19. Audiencia de Mexico, papeleta 77. BL.

be too much danger of them obtaining a hold on the country."

Industrial reform was advocated too by Abad Queipo. He advised the free permission of ordinary factories for cotton and woollen goods and that there should be no regulation as to the width of the cloth, licenses, or other formality, except that of informing the customhouse for the collection of the dues which the law required. Formerly the royal council and the viceroys had permitted wide looms for rich manufacturers and narrow ones for the poor, thus the former consumed most of the wool in the country, which was of bad quality and could not be used for fine cloth. The best fabric made in Querétaro did not sell for more than thirty or thirty-five reales sterling; it was used for blankets and coarse articles of clothing for the common people. The bishop said that wool was not employed for mattresses, since the people did not use them, and it was not allowed to go out of the country. The people were more occupied in the manufacture of cotton cloth which they used on all occasions and in all seasons. They made two principal fabrics called *mantas* or blankets; one was one-half yard wide and cost one or two reales a yard, the other was of better quality and cost three reales a yard. Those materials were substituted for the goods from India. Queipo maintained that if those industries were promoted, they would take away more than 4,000,000 pesos from France, Flanders, Silesia, and India. He declared that Spain did not have linen or cotton cloth to dress half of its inhabitants or to transport to the colonies. It did not send the quantity of fine cloth sufficient for the consumption of the wealthy, or even that of the second grade or medium quality for the middle class. As a result the greater part of the finer materials had to be foreign, therefore the ecclesiastic thought that no injury would arise

"Antonio de Argumedo al consejo de Indias. Huejutla, Dec. 20, 1803, num. 36, AGI, 1790 (91-6-25). Audiencia de Méjico.

from the permission of cloth factories in New Spain.⁸⁸

Juan Cruz tried to promote industry in his bishopric of Guadalajara. He believed that the people who raised cotton and wool should be permitted to take it to the neighboring towns and sell it where they could obtain the best prices, but they had not been allowed to do this. The worthy bishop tried to establish industries in the houses of charity which he founded. He thought that the only way to advance industry in general would be to offer rewards and for the government to protect it so that individuals would become interested in workshops and mills. He hoped that the atrocious custom of assigning malefactors or criminals to workshops for punishment and correction would cease. Cruz advised that industrial instruction should be given in the schools for Indians and the castes to fit them for the most productive work in their part of the country.⁸⁹

An exposition of José Vivero of San Luis Potosí, in which he sought permission to establish factories for articles made from the materials of the country, was considered by the Council of the Indies in 1815. Although those manufactures injurious to the peninsula were rightly prohibited, he said that it would be very useful and convenient to permit freely those of ordinary cotton and woolen cloth, flannels, sackcloth, blankets of cotton, and rebosos which women used and which did not go to Spain. He thought also that there should be permitted all kinds of handiwork which came from foreign countries; in that class were those of linen, and goods made from flax and hemp; and the natives should be instructed in the industries because of the great genius which they had to imitate and to exercise arts. The Council believed it would be unwise to grant the petition of Vivero without further information, therefore the viceroy was told to look into the matter.

⁸⁸"Escrito presentado á D. Manuel Sisto Espinosa del consejo de estado . . ." Madrid, 1807. *In* Mora, I, 111-113.

⁸⁹Juan Cruz to the king. Guadalajara, Jan. 17, 1805, AGI, 104-7-17. Audiencia de Guadalajara. BL.

The fiscal reported that, since the permission was only to make materials produced in Mexico, the course of commerce would not be affected or injured. Then the Council of the Indies decided to grant the request and at the same time declared that articles might be manufactured of hemp and flax and the natives should be taught to perfect them.¹⁰⁰

José María Quirós, who had very advanced economic ideas, believed that agriculture and industry were the basis of national prosperity; he maintained that the Spanish government had not acquired with the possession of the Americas the great advantages which their extension, fertility, variety of climate, products, population, industry, and commerce warranted. By force of restrictions, of monopolies, and obstacles, each time more rigid, Spain wished to extract its precious metals without any other rules of political economy than the incentive of an indiscreet greed; at the same time other powers were enriched, but the Iberian Peninsula experienced true poverty. The American treasures only made the royal family, the armies, armadas, tribunals, and office holders wealthy; there was continual egress without influx of products because of having neglected entirely the solid riches based on the progress of agriculture, industry, the arts, and commerce, which were always the chief source of national prosperity and of the greatness of all states. The gold and silver soon passed to other countries which did not have mines, however they were more wealthy than Spain since they had industrial riches. The mistaken economic measures of the administration did not greatly benefit Spain, for it had to run into debt and its credit was ruined. Quirós said that in the secretariat of the supreme cabinet the plans for the economic, civil, and political régime of the Mexican empire were worked out and the future fate of the inhabitants was disposed of without more experience or knowledge

¹⁰⁰Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, Aug. 22, 1815, AGI, 1902 (92-5-10). Audiencia de Méjico.

than the information from governors and ecclesiastics, which could not be exact nor include details relative to such a multitude of subjects which required special examination and competent understanding in order to proceed with certainty. The first thing that was done was to make excessive gifts of lands to a small number of proprietors who never populated or cultivated them and who regarded valuable native products with indifference. Those proprietors could have raised enough wheat and maize for Mexico and then would have been able to supply Havana and the other island possessions; since they did not do this, those ports were opened to the Anglo-Americans who supplied them and the price of all kinds of comestibles went up and crops were reduced to only what was necessary for internal consumption. The surplus products were therefore lost and the farmers reduced their labors until they had to be aided from the Pious Funds. The government should have applied all its zeal and efficiency to the progress of American agriculture as the most secure means to make the inhabitants happy; nevertheless, on account of lack of knowledge, bad information, and the guidance of an absurd and destructive economic policy they were deprived of the resources of the soil for their well-being. Profitable products like tobacco, which could have given employment to the people, was made a government monopoly, thereby depriving more than forty thousand individuals of both sexes of its cultivation and at the same time of subsistence. Quirós added that the languishing agriculture of New Spain, its abated industry, arts, and commerce, its people without resources and, for the greater part, nude, poor, miserable, and without education or means of subsistence—those were the true germs of the insurrection, which could only be removed by free and direct commerce, the distribution of the lands among the farmers, the suppression of monopolies, and by allowing

fairs and free markets every month.¹⁰¹ He thought that economic societies should be established in the capitals of the provinces to promote industry and find means to perfect it; also a sufficient number of machines should be brought from Europe for the manufacture of all kinds of cotton and woollen cloths according to the latest methods, industry should be encouraged by rewards given to faithful workers, and the muleteers or transporters should be protected.¹⁰²

The question of consumption and production in industry was scarcely ever considered in Mexico except by rare individuals like Abad Queipo, who had sound economic ideas. He stated that if a nation consumed annually all the products of its labor so that there was no surplus it remained stationary. On the other hand, if the products of industry were considerable, if there should be cooperation between the producers and consumers, any nation would be progressive. If the surplus from industry were accumulated in silver in the public treasury or in the hands of individuals, the nation would have power to increase its subsistence and population, but this surplus had to be employed in additional industry for the nation to keep advancing. When consumption was greater than production the opposite would happen. If the productive capital of industry were decreased then the output would be diminished proportionally; for example, if the capital of equipment were decreased one-tenth and it equally affected agriculture, industry, and commerce, Queipo thought that production would be reduced also one-tenth. He said that the general production of New Spain was estimated at 59,000,000 pesos, but it could not be known how much consumption

¹⁰¹José María Quirós, Memoria de ynstituto en que se manifiesta, que ni España ha adquirido con la posesión de las Americas las grandes ventajas de que eran susceptibles, ni estas han conseguido todo el fomento que han demandado sus excelentes proporciones. Vera Cruz, Dec. 31, 1812, AGI, 2516 (96-3-1). Audiencia de Méjico.

¹⁰²Memoria estatuto. Causas de que ha procedido que la agricultura, industria y mineria de Nueva España no hayan adquirido el gran fomento de que son susceptibles. Vera Cruz, Jan. 18, 1818, AGI, 2518 (96-3-3). Audiencia de Méjico.

was augmented. The bishop believed that consumption had grown, since he noted that within the last twenty years the population had increased more than one-fifth, the general production one-third, and the royal revenues one-half. The fortunate condition in this period was due to the annual surplus and because the productive capital and the general production were increased progressively. The good condition lasted until 1805 when progress stopped.¹⁰³

Manufacture became absolutely free in 1814 when the Cortes of Spain provided that all Spaniards and foreigners residing in the peninsula or the colonies might establish the factories which they desired and might engage in any industry.¹⁰⁴ In spite of this wise measure manufacture had not improved much in 1820. It was reduced to the products used by the people, yet it was not sufficient to dress and shoe one-third of them. All the wool of the country, valued at 3,000,000 pesos was needed for the textiles produced.¹⁰⁵

From this account it is evident that industry, the sinews of a nation, was unprogressive in Mexico during the whole colonial period. Mining was the favored industry and, judging from the huge quantities of precious metals that flowed into Spain, it seemed to flourish greatly, but the methods used were wasteful and out-of-date by the nineteenth century. Agriculture, the mainstay of the people, was based upon survivals of medievalism and was not as productive as it should have been with the excellent soil and wonderful climate of New Spain. Manufacture was the most backward of all industries because of the illiberal mercantilistic policy applied to it for so long. The vacillating industrial policies soon caused dissatisfaction

¹⁰³"Escrito presentado á D. Manuel Sisto Espinosa del consejo de estado . . ." Madrid, 1807, *In Mora*, I, 102-105.

¹⁰⁴Francisco López to the alcaldes. Aguayo, May 3, 1814. In *Matamoras Archives*, vol. 25, pp. 108-109. BL.

¹⁰⁵José María Jáuregui, "Discurso en que se manifiesta que deben bajarse los réditos á proporción del quebranto que hayan sufrido en la insurrección los bienes y giros de los deudores . . ." Mexico, 1820. In *Papeles varios*, 161, num. 22, pp. 67-68.

among the people of the dependencies, since each Spanish king had his own ideas on the subject and the Council of the Indies did not always interpret them correctly. The viceroys and other colonial authorities had policies of their own which were often inconsistent with the orders sent to them from Spain, therefore much injury resulted to colonial industries and whenever they did get a good start they were checked by some foolish or contradictory measure. By the nineteenth century new economic ideas had entered the colonies at the same time as the French philosophic writings. The people began to realize their industrial unprogressiveness and the spirit of the creole with its ominous unrest came to the front, demanding reform in this field as well as in many others. When the desired reforms did not materialize during the latter days of Spanish rule in America, then the bold creoles began to think of separation from the mother country in order to have more freedom to put into effect their own industrial ideas.

V.

ECONOMIC ASPECTS: FINANCE

Colonial finance was even more minutely regulated by the home government than commerce and industry; many of the laws of the Indies and the greater part of the Ordinance of Intendants treated the subject. Yet on the eve of independence no department of government was in greater confusion or more impracticably administered than this very important one. The revenues were always large since Mexico was a rich country, and the treasury should have flourished accordingly, but the excessive demands made upon it for the court, the army, foreign wars, and the unprogressive management of the employees shamefully depleted it. Voluntary gifts and forced loans which became very unpopular were resorted to in order to make up the deficits. Finally the people grew tired of continually sending their money to Spain and paying the subsidies of other parts of America and Asia. They first began to realize the richness and wonderful possibilities of their country when Humboldt visited America. Finally the Mexicans began to reason that New Spain would be a much more powerful nation if it were independent.¹

The lack of hard cash for circulation was one of the chief financial difficulties of this period. Abad Queipo declared that there was no nation in Europe which had a smaller amount of cash.² He said,

"If the statistics of entry and departure which have

¹Revista Americana. Dec. 1, 1827, vol. II, Filadelfia, art. 2. In *Papeles varios*, 142, num. 3; Alamán, I, 141-142.

²"Representación á nombre de los labradores y comerciantes de Michoacán sobre la consolidación de vales reales." Valladolid, Oct. 24, 1804. In Mora, *Obras sueltas*, I, 78.

been published from the establishment of the consulado of Vera Cruz were compared it would show that the transportation of silver from that port added to that going out by Acapulco would amount to more than the silver coined in Mexico."³

He added, "The Americas, which are the source of gold and silver are the provinces where those metals are the scarcest in the world, or where there exists the smallest quantity of accumulated money."⁴ Since there was little hard money, as in Spain, the shopkeepers issued tokens of copper, iron, or wood which passed for currency all over the neighborhood; and even grains of cacao were used as small coins.⁵

In 1804 the sum of 27,090,001 pesos was coined, but there were exported to Spain and elsewhere 30,386,859 pesos without counting the money that went out of the country without registry and the foreign contraband. The hard cash in circulation was therefore only one-fifth or one-tenth of the products of Mexico. Almost all commerce had to be done on credit and credit was paralyzed as soon as the insurrection broke out.⁶ The coinage of the mint continued; in 1805 there were coined in gold 1,359,814 pesos and in silver 25,806,074, making a total of 27,165,888 pesos. In 1806 the amount was decreased slightly to 1,352,348 pesos of gold and 23,383,672 pesos of silver, totalling 24,736,020 pesos.⁷ There was a steady decrease in coinage after the revolutions started. In 1810 the mint of Mexico City coined 19,046,188 pesos' worth of money and by 1815 the amount dropped to 7,042,620 pesos. In

³"Escrito presentado á D. Manuel Sisto Espinosa del consejo de estado." Madrid, 1807. In Mora, I, 106.

⁴"Representación á la primera regencia . . ." Valladolid, May 30, 1810, *ibid.*, I, 151.

⁵Pinkerton, *op. cit.*, III, 206.

⁶José María Jáurequi, Discurso en que se manifiesta que deben bajarse los réditos á proporción del quebranto que hayan sufrido en la insurrección los bienes y giros de los deudores . . . Mexico, 1820. In *Papeles varios*, 161, num. 22.

⁷Humboldt, III, 190.

1816 there was an increase to 9,401,290 pesos and a drop to 8,849,893 pesos the following year. Coinage rose to 11,386,288 pesos in 1818 and to 12,030,515 pesos in 1819.⁹

Immense sums were hoarded by some individuals, but the native was poor. The metallic money which exceeded exportation was accumulated in the hands of a few rich persons, who kept enormous quantities in their treasuries without movement, utility, or production. The greatest ostentation consisted of the use of silver in table-service and furniture. This was the probable cause for the assassination of the wealthy Dongo, for in the *salón* of his house the chairs and in general all the furniture were of silver.⁹ Humboldt said that of the 91,000,000 pesos supposed to exist in hard cash in the Spanish colonies only 55,000,000 or 60,000,000 were in Mexico. Whenever a foreign war arose the country was drained of its cash; besides many millions went to Europe in free gifts and subsidies.¹⁰ In 1809 Queipo said that the lack of money for circulation was being resented and every day would be resented more, therefore the time had arrived for relief and the unnecessary silver should be taken from the churches.¹¹

Provincial money came into circulation during the disturbances of the early revolution, but frauds were committed frequently in its use. It was therefore decided to appoint a commission to find means to abolish this money so injurious to the needy classes. In 1817 the king approved the proposal of the ayuntamiento of Vera Cruz to

⁹Razones de las cantidades de oro, plata y cobre acuñadas en la real casa de moneda de Mexico, 1814, 1815, 1816, 1817, 1818, 1819. AGI, 1680 (91-2-14). Audiencia de Méjico; Estado que manifiesta las cantidades de oro, plata y cobre acuñadas en esta real casa de moneda, con los productos, gastos y utilidades líquidas que tuvo, inclusa su agregada del apartado, en los años desde 1810 hasta 4 de marzo de 1816, num. 5, AGI, 1830 (92-1-16). Audiencia de Méjico.

¹⁰Riva Palacio, II, 891.

¹¹*Ensayo político sobre Nueva España*, IV, 135, 137.

¹²"Representación al arzobispo virrey sobre las dificultades de executar la real cédula de Marzo de 1809, sobre el prestamo de 20,000,000 pesos pedido por el gobierno de la metrópoli." Valladolid, Aug. 14, 1809. *In* Mora, I, 129.

get rid of the provincial money, however the viceroy said that it had not injured the treasury as had been feared.¹²

In order to remedy the monetary condition, in 1815 it was proposed to establish four mints in Mexico. On account of the many petitions by persons interested in commerce, agriculture, and mining, the government was obliged to summon a general junta, composed of members of the principal organizations and exalted officials, to consider taxes to maintain the troops. That body suggested the creation of mints in Guadalajara, Guanajuato, Durango, and Zacatecas to provide the interior provinces with money. The superintendent of the mint did not favor such a measure; he reported the inconveniences of it to the viceroy and told him not to put it into effect. The superintendent thought that the situation could be improved by prohibiting the exportation of silver at Tampico, Tuxpam, and Altamira, and by encouraging miners to bring their silver to the mint. Then the junta changed its collective mind and asked for only two new mints, one in Durango and the other in Guadalajara, but they were not established at that time.¹³ When a new mint was finally established in Guadalajara in 1810 it did not remedy the conditions very much. The intendant of that province reported that there was an absolute lack of money and bullion to begin coinage, and for the payment of salaries, the rent of the building, and for other general expenses; therefore Viceroy Apodaca decided to close the mints of Guadalajara and Guanajuato.¹⁴

Capital was always scarce in Mexico for all kinds of enterprises. The surplus of individuals was spent in agriculture, industry, and commerce; nobody reserved more than was necessary to meet expenses. That surplus com-

¹²Consulta del Consejo de las Indias. Madrid, Dec. 9, 1817, num. 32, AGI, 1147 (88-1-10). Audiencia de Méjico; El virey de N. E. conde del Venadito al Exmo. Sor. ministro de hacienda. Mexico, Dec. 31, 1820, num. 1234, *ibid.*

¹³Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, Dec. 17, 1819, num. 32, AGI, 1146 (88-1-9). Audiencia de Méjico.

¹⁴El conde de Venadito al ministro de real hacienda. Mexico, March 16, 1821, num. 1313, AGI, 1324 (89-1-24). Audiencia de Méjico; *ibid.*, Feb. 27, 1821, num. 1293.

posed part of the productive capital and also of the money in circulation.¹⁵ Due to the lack of money among the two hundred thousand persons employed in agriculture, industry, and commerce in New Spain, not more than one hundred managed their business in any of the three branches with their own capital; nor were there ten thousand individuals who owned one-third of the capital which they handled. The general mass of those men worked with funds which did not belong to them; hence business was very much handicapped from the beginning. Abad Queipo believed that all industries of America should be managed by the king's agents with their own funds.¹⁶

The revenues of Mexico were obtained from many sources as in the earlier times. The largest portion still came from the king's share of precious metals and stones mined and in 1804 this amounted to 5,500,000 pesos. The famous tobacco monopoly produced the next largest share of the revenues or from 4,000,000 to 4,500,000 pesos. The hated alcabala brought 3,000,000 pesos into the treasury, the tribute of the Indians and the castes 1,300,000, dues on pulque 800,000, customs duties 500,000, indulgences or Bulls of the Crusade, 270,000, the Post Offices 250,000, the powder monopoly 150,000, the *mesada* or half annate 100,000, the monopoly of playing cards 120,000, stamped paper 80,000, cockfights 45,000, and the monopoly of snow 30,000 pesos. This made the total revenue of New Spain ascend to 20,000,000 pesos, which was 16,000,000 more than Peru received and almost 17,000,000 pesos more than the revenue of New Granada. Such a considerable sum of money would have accomplished a tremendous amount of good if it had been used for the benefit of the colony, but sad to relate only 10,500,000 pesos were employed in internal expenses. Spain

¹⁵Abad Queipo, "Escrito presentado á D. Manuel Sisto Espinosa del consejo de estado." Madrid, 1807. *In* Mora, I, 106.

¹⁶"Representación á nombre de los labradores y comerciantes de Michoacán sobre la consolidación de vales reales." Valladolid, Oct. 24, 1805, *ibid.*, I, 77.

received 6,000,000 pesos of this amount, or twice as much as England received from India; and 3,500,000 pesos went to Cuba, Porto Rico, Santo Domingo, and other Spanish possessions in America as subsidies.¹⁷ Of the amount expended in New Spain 4,000,000 pesos went for military defense, another 2,000,000 for salaries of high officials, 400,000 for hospitals and prisons, 300,000 for expenses of the audiencia, 250,000 for pensions, and 3,500,000 pesos were allowed for the cost of administration.¹⁸ Humboldt said that in Europe there was a very exaggerated idea of the wealth and the abundance of gold and silver in New Spain. Some people foolishly thought that the Mexicans used those metals for ordinary cooking utensils.¹⁹

Complaints about the payment of taxes and the difficulty of their collection had increased at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Frequent requests came from different parts of the country to be relieved from the contribution of tribute. Due to loss of crops which Mexico suffered in 1785 and 1786 and since the loss was great on the estate of the valley of Oaxaca, the people of that region asked relief from tribute.²⁰ The natives of the town of Guascalaya in the jurisdiction of Tulancingo were not able to pay one-third of the tribute of the year 1785 or all of it for 1786 on account of hunger and pestilence, therefore they requested aid from the superior government.²¹ For the same reason the Indians of Chilquautla in the region of Yxmiquilpan asked that one-third of their tribute for 1787 be remitted.²² The indigines of the districts of Pachuca, Tula, Zapotlan, Xalapa, and Santiago in Zimapan

¹⁷Humboldt, IV, 218, 220-225, 243-244, 246, 249; Riva Palacio, III, 22. Peru only sent 1,000,000 pesos to Spain, Buenos Aires 600,000 or 700,000, and New Granada 400,000 or 500,000. The inhabitants of the colonies paid one-third less dues than the people of Spain.

¹⁸Humboldt, IV, 235.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, I, 250.

²⁰Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, Feb. 7, 1805, AGI, 1141 (83-1-4). Audiencia de Méjico.

²¹Manuel Antonio Florez al Exmo. Señor Dn. Antonio Valdés. Mexico, Sept. 25, 1788, num. 572, AGI, 2352 (95-3-2). Audiencia de Méjico.

²²Florez al Exmo. Señor Don Antonio Valdés. Mexico Aug. 27, 1788, num. 516, *ibid.*

were added to the list of those who needed assistance in the payment of tribute.²³ There was another failure of crops in 1789 and at the beginning of 1790, hence petitions came from all the towns in the partido of Tetepango, the town of Mesquitic in the intendancy of San Luis Potosí, the natives of Chila in the province of Puebla, the Indians of the region of Cempoala, the partido of Cadereita, and the town of Tierra Nueva in the intendancy of San Luis Potosí for relief from all or a part of their tribute.²⁴

In 1799 the consulado grumbled because the *avería* had been raised in Mexico.²⁵ The next year the prior and consuls of the organization of merchants of Vera Cruz entreated the sovereign to be freed from the burden of collecting and delivering into the treasuries the dues which pertained to the goods that the body transported. The minister of the treasury of the seaport made the consulado responsible to the mates or captains of vessels for the dues of importation and exportation. Often the arrival of the boats was delayed because the captain had not made up the full amount of the dues demanded by the treasury or on account of the lack of bonds which the minister required. Since this procedure caused great inconveniences to commerce and injury to the state, the consulado asked that the captains and mates should be relieved from such burdens.²⁶ The tribunal of mining petitioned that the *diezmo* be reduced one-half and the dues of silver extracted by fire and quicksilver be lowered one per cent during the scarcity of

²³Florez al Señor Dn. Antonio Valdés. Mexico, Sept. 25, 1788, Sept. 26, 1788, Aug. 27, 1788, Feb. 26, 1789, numeros 570, 578, 580, 515, 830, *ibid.*

²⁴Revillagigedo al Exmo. Señor Dn. Pedro de Lerena. Mexico, Nov. 26, 1790, numeros 180 and 181, AGI, 2353 (95-3-3). Audiencia de Méjico; *ibid.*, Mexico, Oct. 29, 1791, Sept. 26, 1791, numeros 577 and 556, AGI, 2354 (95-3-4), Audiencia de Méjico; Revillagigedo al Exmo. Sor. Dn. Diego Gardoqui. Mexico, Sept. 30, 1792, num. 236, AGI, 2356 (95-3-6). Audiencia de Méjico; Revillagigedo al Exmo. Sor. conde de Lerena. Mexico, Sept. 26, 1791, num. 554, AGI, 2357 (95-3-7). Audiencia de Méjico. Innumerable other examples of requests for relief from tribute might be given if space would permit.

²⁵Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, Sept. 6, 1804, AGI, 1141 (88-1-4). Audiencia de Méjico.

²⁶*Ibid.*, Madrid, March 23, 1803, AGI, 1140 (88-1-3). Audiencia de Méjico.

the amalgamation ingredient lest mining be totally ruined.²⁷

The natives of the jurisdiction of San Juan Teotihuacan, of the town of Alfajayuecan, of Pánuco, and Tampico, all in the intendency of Vera Cruz, in 1804 asked to be exempted from the real and one-half which each Indian tribute payer contributed to the community funds, since they were too poor and miserable to pay the amount.²⁸ In 1811 there was submitted to the Council of the Indies a petition of Jayme Salvet who sought to be relieved of the alcabala, municipal dues, and the diezmo of coffee for twenty-five years, because he was a promoter of the coffee industry on his haciendas of Xochimancas and Barreto in the jurisdiction of Cuernavaca. He had incurred heavy expense in the preparation of the land, planting 400,000 coffee trees, bringing intelligent persons who understood the industry from Cuba, in irrigation, and in setting out shade trees to protect the young coffee trees; therefore he applied for exemption from dues and showed the great advantages that would result to the superior government from an occupation which employed many unfortunate old men, women, and children. It would cause the funds of the treasury to be increased and his example would encourage other individuals to raise coffee. A decree of November 22, 1792, had granted to the agriculturists of Cuba freedom from those dues for ten years, consequently Salvet thought that he should be favored also. The Council of the Indies believed that the exemption from dues might be permitted to him for ten years and to all other farmers who would devote themselves to the new industry according to the decree of 1792 if the king agreed to this.²⁹

Greater slowness in the payment of dues and a silent undercurrent of opposition to them began to be noticed in the latter eighteenth century, which showed that people

²⁷Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, April 1, 1803, AGI, 1140 (88-1-3). Audiencia de Méjico.

²⁸José de Iturrigay al Exmo. D. José Antonio Cavallero. Mexico, July 27, 1804, num. 213, AGI, 1798 (91-7-8). Audiencia de Méjico.

²⁹Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Cádiz, Feb. 21, 1812, AGI, 1821 (92-1-7). Audiencia de Méjico.

were becoming dissatisfied also with the financial situation. There were considerable arrears in the payment of *lanzas* and half annates on titles of Castile in America; therefore in 1773 the king decreed that those individuals who bore such titles should either redeem the debts or deposit the sum of 170,000 reales in the general treasury or 10,000 pesos in the respective treasuries of their provinces. For those who could not pay the back debts, the use of the signature and honors of the title would be suspended.³⁰ Certain towns in Mexico that had been elevated in status were slow to pay the half annate on their new titles. A royal order of March 27, 1799, told Viceroy Azanza to collect the half annate from Acapulco which had been granted the name of city in 1788 at the death of the beloved Charles III. A junta of the inhabitants of that western seaport declared that the sovereign had remitted the payment of the half annate on the titles of the cities of Celaya and Santa Elena because of their antiquity and poverty, accordingly it also pleaded poverty and thought that the dues on its title should not be demanded.³¹ The town of Toluca, which had received the title of city and Coyoacan, which obtained the name of town, had the same excuse as Acapulco about the payment of half annates.³²

The half annate was also levied on the salaries of all officials for one year. In theory even viceroys were supposed to pay it, but the king usually exempted them from the burdensome contribution; therefore the indefatigable Revillagigedo asked to be relieved from it as many of his predecessors had been.³³ At first Branciforte was in doubt whether he was excused from the dues, since the ministers of the treasury did not find a special order for this.

³⁰Royal decree. San Ildefonso, Sept. 7, 1773, AGI, 1310 (89-1-8), Audiencia de Méjico.

³¹Expediente sobre la media annata, de que se hizo cargo al pueblo de Acapulco por su título de ciudad. Sept. 9, 1799, AGI, 1313 (89-1-11). Audiencia de Méjico.

³²Expediente sobre la media annata del lugar de Toluca por el título de ciudad, y del Coyoacan por el de villa. June 12, 1799, num. 7, *ibid.*

³³El conde de Revilla Gigedo al Señor Baylio Fr. Dn. Antonio Valdés. Vera Cruz, Aug. 31, 1789, AGI, 1303 (89-1-1). Audiencia de Méjico.

Nevertheless they discovered so many royal provisions which gave this favor to Flórez, Revillagigedo, and other viceroys that they decided not to collect the half annate from Branciforte.⁸⁴ Viceroy Azanza was exempted from the dues⁸⁵ and Venegas also asked to be freed from it.⁸⁶

The collection of taxes was becoming quite difficult and arrears and deficits were common. The unsatisfactory condition of tribute collection, especially in the towns of San Juan and Santiago of Mexico, was reported by Viceroy Azanza in 1799. He attributed the decay of the tribute to the unfortunate means imposed for its collection on the lowest class of the state, causing an injury to the royal treasury, which since the beginning of the century had suffered many losses because of the failure of contractors of tribute. Attempts had been made earlier in 1780 and 1792 to reform tribute collection and reglamentos were drawn up, but the good effects did not last. The Ordinance of Intendants conflicted with the regulation of the latter year because it ordered domestic servants to pay tribute with the aid of their masters. The code of the intendants did not remedy the situation, since the tribute was higher than before and this caused more evasion of payment and more vagabondage.⁸⁷

The great delay and arrears of the ministers of the treasury of Vera Cruz in the collection of royal dues, on account of neutrals who came to that port and to the other Spanish possessions in the last war, was mentioned by Viceroy Marquina. At the suggestion of the intendant, he proposed that a commission be appointed to prevent more delay and to oversee the collection. The viceroy thought there were too many employees of the treasury in the sea-

⁸⁴Branciforte al rey. Mexico, Aug. 31, 1795, num. 447, AGI, 1311 (89-1-9). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁸⁵King to the viceroy of New Spain. San Lorenzo, Nov. 4, 1796, AGI, 1313 (89-1-11). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁸⁶Francisco Xavier Venegas al ministro de real hacienda. Mexico, April 20, 1811, num. 120, AGI, 1321 (89-1-19). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁸⁷Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, 1804, AGI, 1141 (88-1-4). Audiencia de Méjico.

port; therefore he recommended that they should all be suspended from office and the king should appoint others who would discharge their duties with zeal. His successor, Iturrigary, continued to complain of the delay which he showed had existed since 1783 when expedientes were again drawn up about the matter, although José de Gálvez had reformed the evil conditions in Vera Cruz in 1768. Iturrigaray believed that the administrators of the customs should report monthly to the superior government the entrance of boats and submit the funds of the treasury each month, according to the practice of the customhouse in the capital. He declared that there should be an absolute separation of the customhouses from the treasury of Vera Cruz, since the former had been united with the latter, so that each might exercise the functions peculiar to it; this was accomplished by the royal order of May 1807. Repeated measures were taken to remedy the situation in Vera Cruz, but the treasury continued to suffer scarcity of funds.⁸⁸

The tribunal of accounts informed the Council of the Indies of the inefficient administration of the revenues of the customhouses outside of the capital, of the arrears in their accounts, and the decay in the branches of alcabalas and pulque because the accounting departments of those revenues were united to the general one of the customhouse of Mexico City. The tribunal believed that the accountant could not attend to two occupations at the same time without causing ruin, consequently it asked that the branches should be separated at once. After it had drawn up the expedientes with all the necessary formality the junta superior agreed to the separation and appointed for the customhouses outside of the capital José Mariano de Arce y Echeagaray on account of his merits, learning, and knowledge of

⁸⁸Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, April 3, 1807, AGI, 1143 (88-1-6). Audiencia de Méjico; El contador gral. de la America septentrional. Aug. 25, 1804, AGI, 1144 (88-1-7). Audiencia de Méjico; El virey de N. E. Juan Ruiz de Apodaca remite veinte y quatro testimonios de los expedientes formados para la seperación é independencia de las oficinas de real hacienda de Vera Cruz . . . Mexico, Oct. 31, 1818, *ibid.*

the matter; then it sought the royal approval. The members of the chief accounting office of the customhouse, the administrator of the customs of Mexico City, and the tribunal of accounts were opposed however to the division on the ground that it was not necessary. They did admit there were arrears in the accounts, but they thought that this could be remedied if the number of officials would be increased. The general director of alcabalas wanted the separation and on August 14, 1806, the junta superior decided that it should take place because better service would be obtained and the deficits in the treasury be avoided; therefore the proposed measure was recommended to the king.³⁹

The royal treasury of Mexico was in a deplorable state even before the insurrection of Hidalgo began. At the end of 1803 the general treasury of Mexico City was burdened with a debt of 18,708,590 pesos.⁴⁰ At the end of 1812 the revenue of tobacco, one of the chief sources of income for the state, suffered a monthly deficit of 59,000 pesos. The tobacco growers had to be aided financially in the sowing and cultivation of their crops, and those who lacked money obtained it by selling their products to contrabandists. The mint could no longer meet its obligations because of the decrease of precious metals which came to it. The general treasury had a monthly deficit of 200,000 pesos in spite of the most energetic measures to economize expenses. Viceroy Calleja declared that all means were taken except to reduce salaries, but this was not advisable, since salaries were low in proportion to the increased prices of the necessities of life. He said that under such circumstances it was impossible for the government of Mexico to aid Spain with funds; however he gave permission for merchants to help the mother country financially and they sent 6,968,000

³⁹Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Aug. 29, 1807, AGI, 1143 (88-1-6) and 1814 (91-7-24). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴⁰El tribunal de cuentas remite el estado de la deuda con que se hallan gravadas aquellas caxas. . . Mexico, Jan. 27, 1804, num. 47, AGI, 1155 (88-1-19). Audiencia de Méjico.

pesos to the peninsula. The only way that the viceroy could aid the home land was by a voluntary loan from the powerful individuals of the capital, and he appointed a commission of nine persons to find ways to increase the revenues and make up the deficits.⁴¹

By 1813 the revenues had greatly decreased and there was an astounding deficit in the treasury. The subsidies owed to the different provinces of America alone amounted to 17,454,001 pesos,⁴² and 35,489,020 pesos were owed to the treasury of Mexico, but the tobacco revenue and the mint brought in 1,538,174 pesos. After deducting the latter amount and adding the deficit of the subsidies, the

⁴¹Calleja al rey. Mexico, March 15, May 31, and June 18, 1813, AGI, 1145 (88-1-8). Audiencia de Méjico. The following tables show the decrease in revenues due to the revolution.

	1809	1812	Decrease
Customs dues of the capital . . .	1,014,864 pesos	565,392 pesos	449,471 pesos
Lottery dues	170,768	81,105	89,663
Mint dues	1,614,552	374,798	1,239,793
Estate of the Valley	60,435	42,186	18,248
Novenos and vacantes menores	141,869	106,977	34,391
Temporalities	441,092	13,697	30,451
Post Offices	224,098	19,862	204,236
Tobacco	3,979,950	not known	
Alcabala, pulque, aguardiente.	2,479,306	not known	

Testimonio del expediente instruido a consecuencia de una memoria presentada a la comisión de arbitrios proponiendo la clasificación de la deuda nacional y medias de economizar. Mexico, Oct. 23, 1813, AGI, 1145 (88-1-8). Audiencia de Méjico.

Royal dues in 1810 were	11,934,527 pesos
" " " 1811 "	11,381,365
" " " 1812 "	862,085
" " " 1813 "	1,255,997
" " " 1814 "	14,922,082
" " " 1815 "	15,943,593
" " " 1816 "	2,776,002

Estado que en cumplimiento de superior orden del Exmo. Señor virey de 5 de corriente, forma esta contaduría, y manifiesta los productos anuales de los ramos que se recaudan en esta real aduana comprehensivo desde enero de 1810 hasta fin de febrero de 1816. Num. 1, AGI, 1830 (92-1-16). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴²Calleja al rey. Mexico, June 18, 1813, AGI, 1145 (88-1-8). Audiencia de Méjico. Of this sum 9,793,912 pesos were owed to Havana, 2,990,699 pesos to Porto Rico, 2,971,945 pesos to the Philippines, 40,275 pesos to the Marianas Islands, 31,289 pesos to the Isle of Carmen, 1,299,898 pesos to Florida and Pensacola, and 326,029 pesos to the Spanish legation in Philadelphia.

total indebtedness of the country was 51,404,846 pesos.⁴³ During the last six months of 1813 the known debt ascended to 54,056,299 pesos, and a loan which probably amounted to 2,000,000 pesos was not included.⁴⁴ The total financial debt of 1813 was estimated at 83,000,000 pesos; therefore the Board of Finance decided to suspend the transmission of subsidies to the outside provinces. The year 1814 saw no improvement in the financial situation; the viceroy had to depend on gifts for the movement of troops and the forced loan which he provided for was resisted by some persons of the capital.⁴⁵

Many new and unusual dues had to be imposed as a result of the deficit in the treasury of Mexico and to meet the expenses caused by the insurrections. The contributions and royal revenues were increased to a degree which did not have any proportion to the increase of the mint. Abad Queipo said that 16,000,000 pesos were taken from the revenue of tobacco, great gifts were made by the consulados, the mining organization, the churches, cities, and by individuals, which amounted to some millions; besides there were extraordinary exactions from the governors and chiefs amounting to about 4,000,000 pesos. All that belonged to the king went out of the country and the bishop declared that all money which existed would soon have the same course.⁴⁶ New Spain always contributed generously to the peninsula and at this time the good ecclesiastic avowed that it furnished indirectly, from the dues of its national and foreign products and silver, one-

⁴³Relación circunstanciada de las cantidades que segun las constancias que hay en este tribunal se deben por sus situados a las posesiones ultramarinas de America . . . Contaduría mayor de N. E. 16 de Junio de 1813, AGI, 1837 (92-1-23). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴⁴Advertencias sobre las memorias y estado presentado para consolidación de la deuda del erario nacional de N. E. Jan. 19, 1814, AGI, 1145 (88-1-8). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴⁵Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, 1814, AGI, *ibid.* In 1816 the debt of the treasury of Yucatan was 420,275 pesos. Financial report of the intendant of Yucatan. Mérida de Yucatan 3 de Marzo de 1817, num. 56, AGI, 1155 (88-1-19). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴⁶"Escrito presentado á D. Manuel Sisto Espinosa del consejo de estado." Madrid, 1807. In Mora, *Obras sueltas*, I, 106.

sixth of the revenue of Spain. In addition it contributed directly more than 20,000,000 pesos, a sum truly excessive, since it came from less than one-fifth of the population. With this sum Mexico provided for police protection, the administration of justice, and for its own defense in peace and war. It supported other possessions, as Manila, Louisiana, the Floridas, Trinidad, Porto Rico, Santo Domingo, and Havana. In the dockyards of the latter city New Spain constructed with its own money the greater part of the royal armada. After having spent on foreign obligations about 4,000,000 pesos annually, Mexico sent to the Spanish metropolis another 6,000,000 pesos. The noble Queipo asserted that the colony did not give occasion for the mother country to spend a single peso in its defense and it contributed in a year 8,000,000 pesos which was more than double what the other overseas possessions gave.⁴⁷

The alienation of landed property from *capellanías* (forms of church lands) and the capital of Pious Funds, as provided in the royal cédula of December 26, 1804, was one of the extraordinary ways taken to raise money. The proceeds from those alienations were to pass into the royal treasury to help meet expenses. The measure was put into effect in Spain in 1798, and to a certain extent it was considered beneficial, since the landed property was sold and the clergy was guaranteed equivalent revenues. The estates which came into new hands became more productive, but in New Spain the case was entirely different. The prudent Queipo opposed this decree for many reasons. He said that it was supposed that the Pious Funds of America were very large and consisted of landed property as in Spain, also that a large part of the property was in mortmain without sufficient cultivation. The monarch believed that great benefits would result to the treasury if the property would pass from mortmain to living hands, since there

⁴⁷"Representación á nombre de los labradores y comerciantes de Michoacán sobre la consolidación de vales reales." Valladolid, Oct. 24, 1805. In Mora, I, 74-75.

would be a great increase in cultivation." Queipo stated that the value of the landed property of the pious possessions in Mexico could be estimated at 2,500,000 pesos, but the money on interest which was used by the vassals of the king amounted to 44,500,000 pesos. This latter sum was in living hands—in the possession of the agents of agriculture, industry, and commerce. The total capital from the Pious Funds was 45,500,000 pesos, or two-thirds or three-fourths of the productive capital used in the country. This amount could not be paid into the treasury without reducing the productive capital more than two-thirds or three-fourths. The bishop thought that the alienation of those large funds and the collection of their interest would cause great harm, since there was no silver accumulated in New Spain to pay for them. If it should be possible to pay for them, the productive capital, the general products, and the ordinary revenues of the sovereign would be decreased at least one-third or one-fourth of what they were. The farmers and manufacturers also could not make use of the capital and it would stop the course of industry and agriculture. Queipo was convinced that four-fifths of the land-owners and manufacturers would be ruined if the exactions of the regulation were carried out. An effort was made to put the decree into effect in May of 1805, and the junta superior of Mexico demanded the funds continually with threats of seizure. The Spanish government obtained the sum of 10,656,000 pesos from this measure, but after a year, by June of 1806, there only entered into the treasury of consolidation of the capital 1,200,000 pesos when a multitude of debtors were called to account in the provincial juntas and the junta superior. There were scarcely ten people who paid willingly and all the others refused declaring it was an impossibility. Various organizations en-

⁴⁰Queipo, "Representación á nombre de los labradores y comerciantes de Michoacán sobre la consolidación de vales reales." Valladolid, Oct. 24, 1805. *In* Mora, I, 73-74, 76-77.

treated the viceroy to get the decree suspended⁴⁹ and others, like the tribunal of mining and the city of Mexico, sent their petitions for the suspension of the hated provision of December 26, 1804, directly to the king.⁵⁰ By 1809 almost all the voluntary redemptions of the pious capital had ceased; in the last eight months of that year there were only redeemed in the tribunal of wills of Valladolid 7000 pesos.⁵¹

Without doubt, the royal measure which demanded the payment of the capital pertaining to Pious Funds, regardless of the holder, was considered harsh by many people. Queipo asked for its suspension and declared that it would cause the general ruin of the kingdom and the royal treasury and an inevitable insurrection. He thought it was certain that the decree had influence upon Hidalgo's insurrection.⁵² The energetic bishop had access to the seats of the mighty and obtained an audience with Godoy relative to the decree, but the king's favorite answered that the matter was so delicate that it could not be touched. Then Queipo solicited a conference with Manuel Sisto Espinosa, director of the treasury of mortmain; that minister heard him patiently, did not contradict him, and told him to put his request in writing, which he did. Espinosa finally declared that all the favors asked for America would be granted, although business conditions did not permit the suspension of the *cédula* at that time.⁵³

In 1806 the junta superior imposed a tax of fifteen per

⁴⁹Queipo, "Escrito presentado á D. Manuel Sisto Espinosa del consejo de estado." Madrid, 1807. In Mora, I, 101, 105-106, 108-109. Queipo estimated the productive capital from other sources at 59,000,000 pesos. Alamán, I, 140.

⁵⁰Tribunal de la minería al rey. Mexico, Dec. 17, 1805, AGI, 3170 (99-7-9). Audiencia de Méjico; Representación de la ciudad de Mexico . . . en que solicita se suspenda en aquel reyno el cumplimiento de la real *cédula* de 26 de Diz. de 1804. Mexico, March 28, 1806, *ibid.*

⁵¹Queipo, "Representación al arzobispo virrey . . . Valladolid, Aug. 14, 1809. In Mora, I, 128.

⁵²"Representación á nombre de los labradores y comerciantes de Michoacán sobre la consolidación de vales reales." Valladolid, Oct. 24, 1805. In Mora, I, 97-98.

⁵³*Ibid.*, I, 117-118.

cent on the endowments of the church, which was to be paid as soon as they were made. The archbishop of Mexico appealed to the king declaring that only the monarch could levy dues and that such power did not reside in any junta, for that would take away the sovereignty of the king. He said that the endowment money was kept in the church treasury with other funds and it would be very difficult to separate it from them. Formerly the church paid to the state three per cent of the dowries when they fell into mortmain, but the prelate thought that fifteen per cent was exorbitant.⁵⁴

Voluntary and forced loans were continually employed to raise money for the king throughout the entire colonial period, although in all the urgent demands of the crown the people and the various organizations of New Spain had always been very generous with their gifts. The gifts and loans of some organizations were truly enormous; for instance, the tribunal of mining in 1782 made a loan of 1,000,000 pesos at five per cent interest and in a few years later a similar one; it also contributed outright 550,000 pesos.⁵⁵ In 1793 the provincials, colleges, brotherhoods, priests, and other ecclesiastics contributed to the king as a gift 11,671 pesos to provide for the sinews of war, in addition to the 100,000 pesos which the archbishop and cabildo of the capital gave.⁵⁶ On November 12, 1798, the consuldo of Vera Cruz loaned voluntarily to the monarch 100,000 pesos of its funds in obedience to the royal order of June 20 of that year, which asked for gifts and loans to meet the costs of the war.⁵⁷ Abad Queipo maintained that forced and voluntary obligations caused an incalculable injury, for they fell upon few persons, the most useful members of the

⁵⁴Archbishop of Mexico to the king. Mexico, July 15, 1806, AGI, 1143 (88-1-6). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁵⁵Fisher, *Viceregal Administration in the Spanish American Colonies*, 107.

⁵⁶Alonso arzobispo de Mexico al Exmo. Señor Dn. Pedro Acuña. Mexico, Nov. 29, 1793, num. 11, AGI, 2556 (96-4-11). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁵⁷El consulado de Vera Cruz remite á V. E. el expediente instruido relativo á los cien mil pesos que ha presentado gratuitamente á S. M. de sus fondos respectivos. Vera Cruz, May 1, 1799, num. 8, AGI, 2508 (96-2-14). Audiencia de Méjico.

state, disabling them in the development of agriculture, industry, and commerce; thus they decreased the sources of subsistence and the revenue of the crown. On the other hand they caused expenses and immense work. The king lost the seven and one-half per cent assigned to the agents of collection and five per cent of the annual revenues.⁵⁸

The bishop showed that the putting into effect of the royal decree of March 12, 1809, relative to the loan of 20,000,000 pesos at interest was not good for the welfare of the country. He said that the supreme central junta expected great gifts and loans because of the zeal and patriotism of the rich vassals, who were apt to be egotistical and greedy at the same time. Consequently in a year in which ardor and national enthusiasm had been aroused, in all New Spain not more than 1,000,000 pesos under the title of gifts had been collected and in the future the returns from that source would still be smaller. The level-headed Queipo declared that loans with or without interest were harmful to the general prosperity and to the treasury, therefore they should not be extended or counted on to aid the fatherland in its difficulties. He said that avaricious persons would not part with their money, yet that was the only money which existed in the kingdom and could be loaned without injury to the treasury, agriculture, industry, and commerce.⁵⁹ It seemed to Queipo to be impossible to pay all or even a considerable part of the loan of 20,000,000 pesos because there was not sufficient hard cash in the kingdom to cover it, not even if possession should be taken of all the silver of the churches and of individuals. Queipo thought this was an exorbitant amount to ask when so many other loans had been made, and for a loan to be successful, he believed that the credit of the country should be good and the revenues certain. It would be even more dangerous if the loan were forced, for, except ten or twelve houses in Mexico City and

⁵⁸“Escrito presentado á D. Manuel Sisto Espinosa del consejo de estado.” Madrid, 1807. *In* Mora, I, 110-111.

⁵⁹“Representación al arzobispo virrey sobre las dificultades de executar la real cédula de Marzo de 1809, sobre el prestamo de 20,000,000 pesos. . .” Valladolid, Aug. 14, 1809, *ibid.*, I, 127-129.

Vera Cruz which on many occasions had contributed part of their capital in money, all other merchants and proprietors of the kingdom did not have ready money, but only what they absolutely needed to sustain their business.⁶⁰ On the other hand, the sons of the country considered that it could not be paid and they disliked the exportation of money which was not used for American defense; thus it was necessary to manage the matter with great tact.⁶¹ The observant ecclesiastic thought that Mexico was carrying as heavy financial burdens as it could bear and any project to take away its capital was a mistaken one from an economic viewpoint. He hoped that the sovereign would decide upon contributions which would be in proportion to the strength of the colony. He said that New Spain should not contribute more than it could and its funds should not be believed inexhaustible.⁶² Moreover in the critical circumstances nothing could increase the discontentment as much as the demand for money.

Loans were not stopped, although the wise bishop tried to show their harmfulness. On September 18, 1809, Nemesio Salcedo of Chihuahua received a letter in which the royal council informed him of the triumphs against the French armies and asked him to arouse love for the sovereign, Ferdinand VII, among the ecclesiastic and secular bodies and all the inhabitants, in order that they might contribute as much as possible for the armament and subsistence of the numerous armies organized to defend religion, the king, and country. He was also to entreat bishops to pray publicly and secretly to God to aid the supreme government. Salcedo collected a gift that exceeded 50,000

⁶⁰Abad Queipo al rey. Valladolid, May 30, 1810, AGI, 2375 (95-4-2). Audiencia de Méjico. The ready money which was used for business did not amount to one-twentieth of the capital.

⁶¹"Representación á uno de los vocales de la junta de comercio para realizar el prestamo de 20,000,000 pesos." *In* Mora, I, 143-144; Representación á la primera regencia. . ." Valladolid, May 30, 1810, *ibid.*, I, 150-152. The amount for the two Americas was 40,000,000 pesos and Queipo asked that it should be a voluntary and not a forced loan.

⁶²"Representación á nombre de los labradores y comerciantes de Michoacán sobre la consolidación de vales reales." Valladolid, Oct. 24, 1805, *ibid.*, I, 93, 96.

pesos and requested the viceroy to send it to Spain on the ship "*San Francisco de Paula*."⁶³ The consulado of Guadalajara was likewise very active in raising money for Spain. On November 5, of the same year it notified the viceroy and the supreme junta of Seville that there were 22,000 pesos in the treasury of the city; it raised by subscriptions from the merchants and principal citizens 8276 pesos; not satisfied with this, it issued a circular letter on November 10, to the territorial deputations for gifts, but they answered that they had already subscribed through other organizations. Finally the consulado published a proclamation in which it invited the inhabitants of the kingdom to make their subscriptions for three consecutive years.⁶⁴ At the same time Viceroy Garibay encouraged the people to make gifts and everywhere interest was shown in defense of the great cause of the mother country. Some individuals and bodies like the Carmelite Order doubled their contributions, thereby placing in the general treasury, 20,000 pesos besides the 6000 which had been demanded before. Even the Indians gave freely of the funds which they could raise from their common possessions.⁶⁵ Not satisfied with what was raised by the citizens, on December 6, 1809, the central junta of Spain passed a decree which provided that possessors of jewels of silver or gold should contribute half of their value as a loan to the state, which would be redeemed in money at the rate of twenty reales for an ounce of silver and three hundred and twenty reales for an ounce of gold. In 1813 the amount loaned was reduced to one-third part of the value of the jewels and all persons who had made loans on precious metals were declared creditors of the nation.⁶⁶

Discount on salaries was another unusual way to raise

⁶³Nemesio Salcedo al Señor Don Antonio Porcel. Chihuahua, April 4, 1809, AGI, 1819 (92-1-5). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁶⁴Juan Jph. Cambero al Señor D. Antonio Porcel. Consulado de Guadalajara, May 12, 1809, *ibid*.

⁶⁵Pedro Garibay al Señor D. Antonio Porcel. Mexico, May 12, 1809, num. 16, AGI, 1819 (92-1-5). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁶⁶El decreto de la regencia provisional del reyno. Cádiz, March 15, 1813, AGI, 2384 (95-4-11). Audiencia de Méjico.

money for the treasury. On March 28, 1812, the regency decreed that the salaries of chief officials in both Spain and America were to be discounted one-third. On salaries of 8000 pesos 2500 were to be deducted, on those of 7000 pesos 1700, and on those of 6000 pesos 1500. Viceroy, captains-general and commandants-general, whose annual salary exceeded 40,000 pesos, were to be subject to a deduction of ten per cent, but governors whose remunerations did not exceed 4000 pesos to a discount of only five per cent. In none of the Spanish colonies were the salaries of military men who were in active service to be touched by this decree.⁶⁷ Complaints concerning the decree were soon heard. The captain-general of Havana was permitted at first to suspend it because of the smallness of the salary of officials in that city. The Cortes, however, changed its mind and on two occasions ordered the measure to be enforced, but the intendant begged to be relieved from the discount and kept eluding its payment until he encountered the disapproval of those in authority in Spain.⁶⁸ The viceroy of Mexico tried to apply the decree of 1812 to the judges of the audiencia and caused loud lamentations to be made by those gentlemen because of the discount on their salaries. They declared that their entire salary was absolutely necessary for their maintenance since it was so small.⁶⁹

The most burdensome and multifarious dues continued to be imposed upon the inhabitants of Mexico on account of Hidalgo's insurrection. There were forced lotteries, and in 1811 Viceroy Venegas put two per cent on all merchandise exchanged in the kingdom, twelve per cent on the metals taken to the mint, one peso on each head of cattle, two reales on every sheep, and one real on each goat brought into the capital. He also asked for a loan of 2,000,000

⁶⁷Testimonio del expediente sobre descuento de sueldos a todos los empleados civiles y militares para la continuación de guerra. 1815, AGI, 1145 (88-1-8). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁶⁸Informe de las Cortes de 4 de Julio de 1815 sobre descuentos a los empleados civiles y militares. AGI, 1145 (88-1-8). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁶⁹La audiencia de Mexico pide á V. M. se digne determinar el expediente sobre aumento de sueldos. . . Mexico, Oct. 27, 1814, AGI, *ibid.*

pesos. The rustic and urban estates were subject to a ten per cent tax and five per cent was imposed upon the gold and silver in the possession of individuals. In August of 1812 foods of the greatest consumption were incumbered by a tax called "temporary contribution of the war" which was to be used for the subsistence of the troops. Viceroy Calleja put two per cent on coined silver, ten pesos annually on all persons who wished to ride horseback when they did not need to do so on account of their profession or work, eighteen pesos a month on individuals owning and using coaches, and four pesos on carriages of the road. Finally he established two forced lotteries, one in the capital at 500,000 pesos and another of 1,000,000 pesos outside of it, however they brought few returns for the treasury. Calleja freed the soldiers and employees from the discount of fifteen per cent on their salaries.⁷⁰

In 1816 Pedro Gómora made a report to the Council of the Indies in which he complained of the burdens under which Mexico groaned. He declared that there was a two per cent increase on the alcabala and another two per cent dues with title of convoy. Articles of prime necessity were taxed, tenants of houses had to pay eight per cent, and every merchant supported a soldier. The capital was flooded with copper money that had no value.⁷¹ In the same year, since no other simple measure could be found, one real was imposed upon each fanega of maize consumed and the gatherers of the tithes were ordered to take charge of its collection.⁷² Ignacio Adalio, an inhabitant and farmer of Mexico City, gave account to the king and showed that the landed estates of the colony were burdened to half of their value besides the risk of their occupation because of the awful insurgents, who destroyed their cattle and the things

⁷⁰Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, Dec. 23, 1818, num. 21, AGI, 1147 (88-1-10). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁷¹El consejo de Indias á 26 de Febrero de 1817. AGI, 1147 (88-1-10). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁷²Testimonio del expediente instruido á consulta del ayuntamiento de Querétaro sobre que el colector de diezmos de aquella ciudad pague un real de gravamen impuesto á cada fanega de maiz. Mexico, March 2, 1816, AGI, 1146 (88-1-9). Audiencia de Méjico.

necessary for cultivation. He asked the sovereign to adopt some regulation so that the capital put into the estates might have some return, and he thought that they should begin to pay dues the day the owners first commenced to enjoy the products of agriculture.⁷³

There were some financial frauds, carelessness in handling funds, and failure to appreciate the value of money by some people. For example, in 1790 the superintendent of the mint of Mexico City reported the existence of a deficit of 5331 pesos, which he was investigating. Revillagigedo said,

"Malversation of public funds is a common and inveterate evil, and concerning it many measures have been adopted, with little or no result, notwithstanding the establishment of the accounting house, which was the point upon which the visitor José de Gálvez . . . labored most and gathered least fruit."⁷⁴

Viceroy Branciforte informed the Council of the Indies of the defalcation of Pedro Osorio Montezuma, an accountant, and Francisco Casasola, a treasurer, in the administration of the finances of the royal treasury in Acapulco.⁷⁵ The collector of the lottery in Puebla, Don Nicolás de Aguirre, was short 7000 pesos in 1811 due either to dishonesty or carelessness.⁷⁶ In 1815 Juan Ruiz Crespo and his companion, José Vildosola, stole 130,129 pesos from the general treasury of Oaxaca by means of false receipts. The intendant, José María Lasco, became involved in the matter, since he was held responsible for the financial agents of his province. But the king pardoned him because of his good serv-

⁷³Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, Nov. 13, 1818, num. 18, AGI, 1147 (88-1-10). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁷⁴El superintendente de la real casa de moneda de Mexico da cuenta con certificación del contador de ella, del corte executado en 31 de Diciembre de 1790. . . AGI, 1748 (91-5-11). Audiencia de Méjico; *Instrucción reservada*, arts. 154-156.

⁷⁵Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, April 9, 1799, AGI, 1139 (88-1-2). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁷⁶Testimonio del expediente formado sobre el descubierto de siete mil pesos que tubo el colector de la real lotería D. Nicolas de Aguirre. Mexico, 1811, AGI, 2171 (94-2-8). Audiencia de Méjico.

ices and the losses he had suffered in the affair.⁷⁷ Young men who were fond of gambling seldom realized the value of money; they affected great indifference and cheerfulness when they lost. It was common for a man to enter a gaming house, produce ten or twenty pesos, which had been tied up in the corner of his mantle, lay them on a card, lose them; and without saying a word, produce a cigar from behind his ear, light it, and walk out, as if nothing had happened.⁷⁸

Many financial reforms were tried in Mexico since the visitation of Gálvez, who made great improvements in the administration of the revenues of the treasury. The famous Revillagigedo wrestled with the chaos of the fiscal system by systematizing the expenditures and receipts of the treasury. He provided that on Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday mornings warrants for salaries, pensions, annuities, and similar expenses should be paid; in the afternoons the royal fifths and tithes were to be received from the treasuries outside of the capital.⁷⁹ In spite of earlier reforms, Viceroy Branciforte found the treasury of Mexico empty and had to depend on loans when he took charge of the government.⁸⁰

The resourceful Abad Queipo proposed a plan to reform the revenues and to take the place of the alienation of the capital of Pious Funds. He suggested that the alcabala dues, which were six reales in 1804 and produced 6,000,000 pesos, should be increased to eight, so that the treasury would be augmented by at least 1,500,000 pesos. He also wanted the price of tobacco, which was ten reales a pound, to be raised two or three or even four reales and thus another 1,500,000 or 2,000,000 pesos would be brought into the treasury without responsibility, expense, or work. The bishop thought that both of those means were advantageous because they reached the greatest number of people

⁷⁷Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, Oct. 29, 1818, num. 17, AGI, 1147 (88-1-10). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁷⁸Pinkerton, *Modern Geography*, III, 182.

⁷⁹Revillagigedo, *Instrucción reservada*, arts. 886-888.

⁸⁰*Instrucciones que los vireyes de Nueva España dejaron a sus sucesores*, 131-133.

in proportion to individual consumption. The *alcabala* was earlier increased two per cent in circumstances which were not so urgent and was not badly received; it was paid by the seller, and the buyer would not notice its increase, and the tobacco tax was on a luxury which custom made a necessity. Thirdly, Queipo believed that the thirty or forty pesos tax on grocery stores and all shops where comestibles were sold should be removed. It was a stupid tax from the beginning, it had small returns, for it reduced consumption to the injury of agriculture and the treasury, and it deprived a large number of poor honest families of subsistence. Those who made their living from shops where mixed drinks and food were sold had to abandon them because they could not pay the tax. As a result in all the towns a monopoly was formed of those articles by the larger shops with great capital, to the serious injury of the consumers. He likewise thought that the six pesos imposed on each barrel of brandy made from sugar cane when it left the factory should be lowered two pesos, which was the amount paid in Havana, since the high tax was ruinous to the industry and caused contraband in the liquor. With a larger consumption of the brandy of the maguey plant, which was to be permitted generally in the kingdom, and the whisky of sugar cane more than 600,000 pesos would be produced annually for the treasury. Finally Queipo advised reform in financial privileges and the litigations relative to the treasury to cut down expenses.⁸¹

To meet the expenses of the insurrection the unselfish Queipo proposed that the funds from ecclesiastical vacancies of Spain and the Indies should be set aside. This would conform with the spirit of the church, but the money could

⁸¹"Escrito presentado á D. Manuel Sisto Espinosa del consejo de estado." Madrid, 1807. *In Mora*, I, 109-110, 114, 116; "Representación a la primera regencia. . ." Valladolid, May 30, 1810, *ibid.*, I, 150-156; Representación al rey. Valladolid, May 30, 1810, AGI, 2375 (95-4-2). Audiencia de Méjico. By those methods Queipo thought that in ten years the national debt would be extinguished and a surplus of 13,500,000 pesos would result for the treasury. The new dues from tobacco could be administered by the ordinary ministers of the treasury, without the need to increase their number or useless expenses.

not be used for any other less serious purpose. He believed that the revenues from the major vacancies (*vacantes mayores*) of America could maintain ten regiments and those of Spain twenty without injury to divine worship. He also suggested that the king order all prelates to suspend the construction of pious works in their districts and that those funds be applied to the costs of the war, for no work was more pious than to save the country. As another recourse he wanted the sovereign to command that all worked silver which existed in the nation in domestic utensils, excepting some table service, the silver of the churches of the peninsula, and a few necessary articles, be appropriated for the war. The bishop thought that the silver could be taken out of the American churches by their prelates without the notice and distress of the people. He hoped that prudent individuals would give the state a considerable part of their silver and if necessary the penalty of confiscation for hiding it should be employed. In addition the king was to enjoin all the political and ecclesiastical organizations, grandees and those with titles of Castile, first born sons, proprietors, lessees paying 10,000 reales or more rent, manufacturers, and merchants to make a sworn statement of their ordinary incomes and another of their losses, so that the contributions asked might be regulated according to the powers of the contributors and the needs of the state. Rewards could be given to those who offered their money with patriotic generosity and those who made false statements were to be punished.⁸² For the extraordinary expenses of defense the import and export dues should be increased in the customhouses of Vera Cruz and Aca-pulco.⁸³

The hated tribute was abolished by the Cortes during the early insurrection as a means of keeping the people loyal to the royal cause. It was thought in Mexico that the re-

⁸²"Representación á la junta central. . ." Valladolid, Aug. 18, 1809. *In* Mora, I, 133, 136.

⁸³Queipo, "Representación á uno de los vocales de la junta de comercio para realizar el prestamo de 20,000,000 pesos." *Ibid.*, I, 142.

peated entreaties of Abad Queipo, who said that the tribute was the most hated of all dues and the treasury received only 1,000,000 pesos from it while it cost the contributors 3,000,000 pesos, caused the decree to exempt the Indians from tribute to be passed. He had directed his clamors to the Spanish government since 1791 to get rid of this tax. Finally a general Spanish junta examined the suggestions of the bishop of Michoacán on September 11, 1810, and agreed to extinguish in all America the tribute, personal service, and the rights of encomenderos for other dues which the viceroy should propose. The chief executive was to decide upon those new taxes after consulting the advice of the fiscals, and a junta composed of the archbishop, regent, intendant, members of the chief accounting house, the accountant of tributes, a minister of the treasury, and the senior regidor or an able lawyer. On March 13, 1811, a decree was therefore passed which abolished tribute in both Americas for the Indians and all castes. It was a Pyrrhic victory because the loss of the large amount of revenue produced by the extinguished branch was realized immediately and the treasury was not in a good condition to combat the insurrection. The treasury had had a deficit of 432,781 pesos annually and with the extinction of the tribute it rose to 913,197 pesos. Juntas were held to find means to make up the deficit, but to no avail. It was believed that the Indians should pay the alcabala in spite of the laws to the contrary. The viceroy tried to impose the dues upon them, however he gave it up because of fear of the fatal consequences.⁸⁴ Doubts arose whether the Indians should pay the contributions paid by the Spaniards, or if there would be substituted other dues in place of the tribute. The only answer given to those doubts was that the viceroy could take the measures which he thought best to make up for the tribute.⁸⁵ The fiscal of Peru uttered loud complaints

⁸⁴Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, Oct. 6, 1814, AGI, 1144 (88-1-7). Audiencia de Méjico; El secretario interior del despacho de hacienda. Cádiz, Sept. 20, 1813, *ibid.*

⁸⁵Hacienda de ultramar. Cádiz, June 28, 1813, *ibid.*

concerning what he called the premature determination of the government to free the Indians from tribute, since it produced a deficit in the treasury of all America and made it impossible to pay current expenses or those of the revolution. He said that Abad Queipo had mistaken ideas when he asked for the abolition of the tribute, expecting it to quench the insurrections that had begun. The fiscal asserted that the measure had just the opposite effect, for the revolution went on with greater vigor and spread extraordinarily; hence the only effective remedy was to cause the laws to be obeyed and to reestablish the tribute to prevent the indolence of the natives and the castes.⁸⁸

The absurd policy of tribute payment by the Indians of Mexico was reestablished by a royal decree of March 1, 1815, and whatever good that may have been obtained by the abolition of the hated contribution was undone. Viceroy Calleja was greatly puzzled about what should be done with the order, for he realized the many difficulties that would arise in putting it into effect. He conferred with the fiscal of the treasury, the assessor general of the viceroyalty, and his *acuerdo* or council; it was decided to publish the decree by proclamation and send it to the intendants to enforce in those provinces not affected by the revolution or where the insurrection had been extinguished. The documents were printed but there was still doubt about their promulgation, therefore the criminal chamber and the fiscals of the audiencia were consulted; they maintained that there would be many obstacles in the execution of the decree and great circumspection would be needed. The *acuerdo* and junta superior then agreed to suspend the fulfillment of the decree and give account to the king, since it would be impossible to persuade the Indians and the castes of the benefits of the reestablishment of tribute and of the sincerity of the government. It was also thought that the

⁸⁸Fiscal de Peru al consejo. Madrid, Oct. 19, 1814, AGI, 1144 (88-1-7). Audiencia de Méjico.

rebels would make use of the measure to seduce the people.⁸⁷

Financial conditions in Mexico were almost hopeless as the revolutions continued. Much of the capital invested before the uprisings was lost, the revenues of the state and the church were ruined, honest occupations disappeared due to the plunderings and the workers being in the opposition armies or emigrating to foreign countries; the value of estates depreciated to almost half, and commerce was destroyed.⁸⁸ As a result it took many years to recover from the financial losses. New mints were established during the early insurrection to meet the currency problem. In 1810 a mint was created in Guadalajara and the next year there was one in Guanajuato. Others were soon found necessary and appeared in Durango in 1823, in San Luis Potosí in 1826, and in Tlalpan in 1827, however false money did not disappear.⁸⁹

Discontent toward the Spanish régime in America increased because of the confusion of financial administration, the lack of money for circulation, the scarcity of capital for the promotion of economic enterprises, the high taxes for revenue purposes, the delay in meeting financial obligations, the new and unusual ways of raising money to quell the insurrection of Hidalgo, and the hated forced loans. For the first time in the latter eighteenth century there were many complaints about the payment of dues and innumerable were the requests to be relieved from them. This showed that even some of the most loyal and submissive people of New Spain were tired of the unprogressive fiscal conditions, which defied description, and that there was a limit to their

⁸⁷El virey de N. E. Don Felix Ma. Calleja dá cuenta con testimonio de las actuaciones practicadas sobre el restablecimiento del ramo de tributos en aquel reyno. . . Mexico, July 31, 1816, num. 48, AGI, 1830 (92-1-16). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁸⁸José María de Jáurequi, "Discurso en que manifiesta que deben bajarse los réditos á proporción del quebranto que hayan sufrido en la insurrección los bienes y giros de los deudores." 1820. In *Papeles varios*, 66, num. 7, pp 7-17, 69-71.

⁸⁹Juan Nepomuceno Sanabria, "Análisis y observaciones al artículo editorial sobre casas de moneda." San Luis Potosí, 1830, *ibid.*, 167, num. 7, pp. 8-28.

contributions to the mother country. The bolder spirits among them began to think that they could manage their own finances and improve the general economic conditions of their rich country if it were separated from Spain. Accordingly dissatisfaction with the financial situation was one of the strong factors in the development of the movement for independence in Mexico.

VI

THE CHURCH

The church was the most powerful institution in Mexico at the eve of the revolution; for the general mass of people there was only one true creed and they believed it was right to suppress all religious views at variance with it. The growth of the power of the church was not surprising because the clergy was scattered throughout the country, held many high positions, and was controlled by its centralized organization, which since medieval times has always been one of the most remarkable in the world. The church secured its strongest hold over the people during their childhood and also by its monopoly of the educational system of the colony. The accumulation of vast amounts of property and wealth likewise helped to increase its authority; but, as in all nations where the church amassed great riches, worldliness crept into the venerable institution. The efficiency and vigor of the ecclesiastics of the conquest gave way to indifference and laxness. The church remained medieval in thought and when it declared that earthquakes, epidemics, or calamities were instances of divine punishment for the sins of the people, the popular mind believed it without question. Its members were not expected to doubt the authority of the divine institution and, occasionally when some of them caught a glimpse of better ways from their readings, the church became very intolerant and uncompromising. There were certain broad-minded ecclesiastics who departed from the narrowness of religious conservatism and, although they criticized the church as it was conducted during the colonial period, their doctrinal views remained practically the same.

There were great inequalities among the members of the clergy just as in the other classes of society in New Spain.

The upper clergy (*clero alto*), which included the archbishop, bishops and members of the cathedral chapters, were mostly European Spaniards and they received the high salaries. The annual income of eight Mexican bishops amounted to 539,000 pesos and the archbishop received a salary of 130,000 pesos. The bishop of Puebla received 110,000 pesos, the bishop of Valladolid 100,000, the bishop of Guadalajara 90,000, the bishop of Durango 35,000, the bishop of Monterrey 30,000, the bishop of Yucatan 20,000, the bishop of Oaxaca 18,000, and the bishop of Sonora 6000 pesos. The lower clergy (*clero bajo*) was quite a contrast to the upper group; it was a class socially distinct from the first and lacked its training and culture. It was composed of priests and other ecclesiastics who filled the more humble offices of the church; naturally they were more subject to local influences and prejudices arising from birth and station. What a contrast to the high salary of the upper clergy was that of priests in Indian towns who scarcely received one hundred or one hundred and twenty pesos a year!¹ The famous Abad Queipo said that four-fifths of the secular clergy in America, and especially in his bishopric, subsisted on only the small remuneration of their office, and most of the regular clergy was in the same condition, yet they had great influence over the people.² The bishopric of Michoacán was so large that in some of the towns no other white face could be seen except that of the priest or the justice. Sometimes even the justice was a mulatto. Many of the parishes were so poor that they could not maintain more than one priest, who was greatly overworked. It was not strange that conscientious priests died in six or eight months or became ill for life, and the bishop was forced to make use of extraordinary means of reward and punishment to provide ministers for that part of his flock. The regular clergy (*clero regular*) formed another group, that of the orders, and as a rule its mem-

¹Humboldt, I, 248-249; Riva Palacio, II, 896.

²"Representación sobre la inmunidad personal del clero." Valladolid, Dec. 11, 1799. *In Mora, Obras sueltas*, I, 64, 44.

bers were dominated by the upper clergy, but those who went out as missionaries to the distant frontiers were more sympathetic with the lower clergy.

According to Humboldt there were from 13,000 to 14,000 ecclesiastics in New Spain, including those not assigned to sacred orders.³ Bishop Queipo spoke of the 8000 or 9000 regular and secular ecclesiastics in the audiencia district consisting of the bishoprics of Sonora, Durango, and Guadalajara.⁴ Riva Palacio said that in 1803 there were 1072 parishes in New Spain, filled by 2300 ecclesiastics, 264 convents, and 157 missions, making a total of 8000 ecclesiastics.⁵ In 1810 Francisco Navarro y Noriega estimated the secular clergy in Mexico at 4229, the regular at 3112, and the nuns at 2098; all of whom totalled 9439.⁶ The members of the clergy were unequally distributed in the spacious country of Mexico to meet the urgent needs of the people. For instance, there was a maximum of 2657 male ecclesiastics in the archbishopric of Mexico, but in Texas which was many times larger than that diocese there were only thirteen Franciscans. In Puebla there were a few over one thousand ecclesiastics when in all Upper California not more than forty could be counted.⁷

At the end of the eighteenth century the clergy in New Spain became extraordinarily wealthy and enjoyed many revenues. Frequently elderly persons wanted to obtain the favor and services of the church, therefore they made donations and willed property to it. Large estates sometimes came into the possession of the church because of appreciation for the excellent work done by various members of the clergy. Property acquired by the holy institution could never be alienated; thus the church grew in power, wealth, and prestige, and its landed estates increased proportionally.

³*Ensayo político sobre Nueva España*, I, 247.

⁴"Representación sobre la inmunidad personal del clero." Valladolid, Dec. 11, 1799. In Mora, I, 45.

⁵*México á través de los siglos*, II, 896.

⁶"Memoria sobre la población del reino de Nueva España." Mexico, 1820. In *Papeles varios*, 161, num. 7, p. 24.

⁷P. Mariano Cuevas, *Historia de la iglesia en Mexico* (El Paso, 1928), V, 35-36.

Humboldt said that the wealth of the clergy did not consist as much of landed estates as of other possessions, such as buildings, mortgages, and many other urban possessions in the principal cities—Mexico City, Puebla, and others. Each chaplaincy and brotherhood was a kind of bank. From the eve of the conquest Cortés feared the great opulence of the clergy in a country where it was difficult to maintain ecclesiastical discipline. He wrote to the king to send religious and not canons to the Indies because the latter displayed luxury, left great wealth to their natural children, and scandalized the recently converted Indians.⁸

In 1786 an unknown writer attributed the misdeeds of the religious to their acquisition of wealth, which was a violation of their vow of poverty. He said that as soon as they began to show the quantities of money, which their parishioners contributed as dues, their disorders and disobedience to their prelates increased. They walked alone through the streets and frequented indecent places; they stirred up hatred against their prelates and scandalized the people; in the controversies which they had with their superiors religious fervor cooled and discipline decreased. They spent the revenues of the monasteries and finally intimidated their prelates by endeavoring to elect individuals of their faction. The writer maintained that they could have spent their time and money to great advantage if they had educated the multitude of poor children in the capital, for whom there were not sufficient schools.⁹

The government also recognized the danger of the acquisition of vast wealth by the clergy; some laws were made to prevent it, but they found no adequate support in public opinion. For instance, it was forbidden that lands divided among discoverers, ancient inhabitants, and their descendants should be alienated to a church or monastery.¹⁰ As early as the seventeenth century the members of the ayunta-

⁸*Ensayo político sobre Nueva España*, I, 249-250.

⁹Carta al Señor Marqués de la Sonora, Don José de Gálvez. Mexico, June 23, 1786, AGI, 1874 (92-3-14). Audiencia de Méjico.

¹⁰Queipo, "Representación sobre la inmunidad personal del clero." *In* Mora, I, 15.

miento of Mexico, seeing the great number of convents of both sexes that had been erected, the crowd of persons who were assigned to the ecclesiastical estate, also the great sums invested in pious foundations, asked the king not to permit the establishment of any more convents of religious or nuns since there were too many of them, to limit the estates of convents, and not allow them to acquire more. They maintained that if convents were not prohibited ecclesiastics would become owners of everything; they did not want any more religious sent from Spain because many of them lived in idleness in America. Nothing was done about the matter and the conditions continued. The first effective check which the wealth of the clergy received was when the Jesuits were expelled in 1767 and their estates were applied to the treasury.¹¹ On March 14, 1786, the order of the Barefoot Carmelites adopted the rule approved by the civil government that their convents might not have possessions or landed property. Those acquired by wills or by any kind of alms should be sold as soon as possible and the capital should be employed for the permanent use of the convents.¹²

Various estimates of the church possessions have been made. Alamán declared that the entire possessions of the clergy, seculars as well as regulars, in estates and all kinds of credits was not half of the value of the landed property of the country as in some of the nations in Europe.¹³ Humboldt said that the landed property of the Mexican clergy did not exceed 2,500,000 or 3,000,000 pesos, but immense riches were possessed in mortgages on the property of individuals, pious works, and dowry funds, the total of that capital amounting to 44,500,000 pesos.¹⁴ Abad Queipo stated that the value of the landed property of the pious possessions in Mexico was 2,500,000 pesos, but the money

¹¹Alamán, *Historia de Méjico*, I, 66-68.

¹²José Manuel Jesus, "Exposición que el provincial del Carmen hizo al supremo gobierno sobre las ventas de fincas que celebraron algunos conventos de su orden." Mexico, Feb. 12, 1834. In *Papeles varios (Variedades políticas)*, 73, num. 3, pp. 6-7.

¹³Alamán, *Historia de Méjico*, I, 67.

¹⁴*Ensayo político sobre Nueva España*, I, 249.

on interest which was used by the vassals of the king amounted to 44,500,000 pesos, hence the total capital from the Pious Funds was 45,500,000 pesos.¹⁵ This capital circulated in the hands of seculars and promoted agriculture, commerce, and industry, with great advantage to the royal treasury. The bishop maintained that, instead of being an ownership monopolized in mortmain, it was a fruitful source which encouraged the industry of society. He said that the actual ownership of the church in America was small and the little that there was consisted of the endowments of the religious orders of Santo Domingo, San Agustín and the Barefoot Carmelites. In his bishopric of one hundred and twenty-eight parishes, including the eleven that were afterwards added to the bishopric of Guadalajara and the forty-eight of the regulars of both sexes, the ecclesiastical revenue was 206,030 pesos which was part of the capital of 3,030,000 pesos. This amount scarcely equalled the wealth of one of the king's vassals; for instance, the riches of the count of Valencia of Guanajuato exceeded this sum when they were divided among his heirs.¹⁶ Besides the revenues produced by ecclesiastical estates and capital, the secular clergy had the diezmos which, according to Alamán, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, in all the bishoprics of New Spain amounted to 1,800,000 pesos annually, although the government received part of this sum. In the bishopric of Michoacán the tithes were leased publicly and

¹⁵"Escrito presentado á D. Manuel Sisto Espinosa del consejo de estado." Madrid, 1807. *In Mora*, I, 101. The funds were distributed as follows:

Mexico	9,000,000 pesos
Puebla	6,500,000
Michoacán	4,500,000
Guadalajara	3,000,000
Durango, Monterrey, Sonora	1,000,000
Oaxaca and Yucatan	2,000,000
Pious Funds of regulars of both sexes	2,500,000
Capital composing endowment fund of churches and religious communities of both sexes	16,000,000
Total	44,500,000 pesos

Cuevas, V, 41.

¹⁶"Representación sobre la inmunidad personal del clero." Valladolid, Dec. 11, 1799. *In Mora*, I, 16-17.

this made their collection more rigorous and oppressive.¹⁷ Judging from the receipts of the *novenos* (two-ninths of the tithes called royal ninths), there had been a steady increase in the amount of the tithes; from 1771 to 1780 the total collection was 1,231,401 pesos, and from 1781 to 1790 it was 1,662,763 pesos.¹⁸

The wealth of the church in Mexico received its greatest blow on December 26, 1804, when the court of Madrid decreed that the estates of pious foundations should be alienated and the capital should be collected into the treasury for the purpose of aiding Spain in the serious conflicts of the war. The large estates were leased to individuals who paid the rents promptly and the capital was loaned at interest. With the alienation of the estates and pious capital many families were ruined and at the same time agriculture, commerce, mining, and finally the royal revenues were injured. For the execution of the measures, juntas were established in the capitals of each viceroyalty and of the respective bishoprics, composed of the chief civil and ecclesiastical authorities and of the royal commissioners appointed especially for the purpose.¹⁹ The decree was one of the most fertile agents to provoke mistrust and strong differences among the Spaniards and the viceroy. Iturrigay was ordered to collect the funds, which he did energetically, and he was granted a certain per cent of what he collected, therefore he was interested in the execution of the measure. Great was the disgust among the proprietors who were ruined and among the clergy! Great were the obstacles and resistance to its realization! The clergy and capitalists intimately united by interests eluded obedience to that order. The clergy saw that the capital would be entirely lost because the guarantees given were not sufficient. Debtors and creditors made common cause to hinder the measure as much as possible; various representations were made against

¹⁷*Historia de Méjico*, I, 68.

¹⁸Fabián Fonseca and Carlos Urrutia, *Historia general de real hacienda* (Mexico, 1845-1853), I, pp. XIX, III, 136-262.

¹⁹Alamán, I, 137-139.

the decree and powerful people worked to annul its effects.²⁰ The public-spirited Abad Queipo drew up a petition in the name of the farmers and merchants of Michoacán relative to the matter, and when he was in Spain in 1807 he presented a memoir on the subject to Manuel Sisto Espinosa. The bishop pointed out the evils to the viceroy and, when that representative of the king did not listen, the people and many officials censured him so that his position became very difficult. Another exposition was made by the tribunal of mining, which showed the serious injuries that would result to agriculture and the arts, for which the Pious Funds were always an open bank from which the necessary money was obtained with small interest for the encouragement of all business. The representations were not heeded and the enforcement of the measure caused severe distress and much uncertainty. Sometimes violence was employed to collect the capital and the estates were put up at auction.²¹

Before 1816 a measure was taken to prevent the growth of ecclesiastical estates when a Mexican Church Council prohibited priests from possessing haciendas in the district of their parishes or within ten leagues around them. The captain-general of Yucatan reported that the provision was being violated, the priests summoned Indians from their homes under the pretext of religion to work on their estates, and many lawsuits resulted; therefore the Council of the Indies commanded that the measure should be observed.²² On December 9, 1818, the king sent a special order to the governor and captain-general of Yucatan commanding that what was provided by the Mexican Council should be observed.²³ In America ecclesiastical possessions were acquired and sold without the intervention of the civil authority or any other individual, but an order of the Spanish

²⁰Castillo Negrete, *México en el siglo XIX*, I, 64-65.

²¹Alamán, I, 139-140.

²²Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, Nov. 23, 1818, AGI, 1147 (88-1-10). Audiencia de Méjico; [Draft] del consejo de las Indias. Sept. 30, 1817, AGI, 2701 (97-2-17). Audiencia de Méjico.

²³El rey al gobernador y capitán general de la provincia de Yucatan. Palacio, Dec. 9, 1818, *ibid.*

Cortes of May 21, 1821, authorized the king to grant license to various prelates who asked for the alienation of their estates, and from this it was inferred that such permission had always been necessary.²⁴

The exactions of the clergy from the people were very high and became a source of discontent. Payment of tithes on their estates had frequently been resisted by the Jesuits on the ground of the privileges and exemptions known as *fueros*. The Jesuits had alleged that they were granted pontifical privileges which freed them from paying tithes, and for many years they carried on lawsuits relative to the matter. Their quarrel about tithes with bishops and civil authorities was one of the causes that led later to their expulsion from America. Even nuns showed a contentious spirit in the payment of tithes.²⁵ Complaints about the payment of tithes were still heard in 1825, when Señor Polar avowed that the people should cease to pay tithes, no matter what was the origin of them, since it was a hated and unjust imposition, a burden to the people and injurious to society.²⁶ The fees of the church for burials, marriages, baptisms, and other services of the clergy were increased and became very burdensome to the poor Indians. In 1795 the fees on marriage were raised two pesos besides the four *gallinas* and the six reales which they paid before. As a result many Indians were not religiously or legally married, and this is still true in Mexico at the present time. Anastacio Benitos lamented that the natives were burdened with constant contributions, that their indebtedness was augmented, and if their misery grew any worse they would perish from hunger because of the little which remained to them after meeting all their obligations. If they could not pay they were imprisoned, or forced to work for the ecclesiastics until nightfall with-

²⁴José Manuel Jesus, "Exposición que el provincial del Carmen hizo al supremo gobierno sobre las ventas de fincas que celebraron algunos conventos de su orden." Mexico, Feb. 12, 1834. In *Papeles varios (Variedades políticas)*, 73, num. 3, p. 5.

²⁵Ordenes de la corona. MS, IV, pp. 15, 140-145. BL; Genaro García, *Don Juan de Palafox* (Mexico, 1907), 145-149.

²⁶"Conjuración del Polar contra los abusos de la iglesia." Guadalajara, 1825. In *Papeles varios (Variedades políticas)*, 68, num. 2, pp. 3-4.

out even a tortilla to eat, their children were maltreated and compelled to work without pay, and they were not instructed in Christianity.²⁷

In the bishopric of Oaxaca an attempt was made to excommunicate all who did not pay the exactions demanded by the church. On April 7, 1780, there was published an order of the bishop of that diocese, which commanded that all growers of cochineal who did not give a sworn report of what they raised and did not pay the whole one-tenth of the precious product would be excommunicated. The cochineal growers hastened to the audiencia to get the edict removed, which was done in 1784, and they asked relief from the payment of the tithe on account of the decadence of the cochineal industry.²⁸ The archbishop of Mexico received a royal dispatch in which he was ordered to take individual notice of the excessive dues and exactions with which the priests oppressed the Indians of Tepeaca; he was to reduce and moderate them as he thought best and just, giving account to the royal audiencia.²⁹

As late as 1804 the Indians of the archbishopric of Mexico were punished by whipping because they failed to attend mass and Christian instruction, or for some other offence. The archbishop said that it was a penalty approved by the laws and Mexican Councils, and established by custom as the treatment least dangerous to the natives and useful to religion and the state. The archbishop believed that there was need for such punishment on account of it being the only means to govern the Indians well and keep them faithful. He said that there was much harm because the royal judges opposed the use of the lash by priests to chastise the natives.³⁰

²⁷Anastasio José Benitos al fiscal. Mexico, Feb. 21, 1795, misiones, tom. 21, p. 546. Archivo General. BL.

²⁸Diferentes cosecheros hacen presente a V. M. la decadencia del precioso fruto de la grana, y la necesidad de repararla eximiendola de toda pensión decimal. . . Oaxaca, July 22, 1806, AGI, 2693 (97-2-9). Audiencia de Méjico.

²⁹El arzobispo de Mexico al Señor D. Antonio Ventura de Taranco. Mexico, May 27, 1787, AGI, 1742 (91-5-5). Audiencia de Méjico.

³⁰Representación al Consejo de Indias. Mexico, Nov. 25, 1804, AGI, 1155 (88-1-19). Audiencia de Méjico.

Scandalous corruption was noticed in the church of New Spain as early as the beginning of the eighteenth century, especially among the regular clergy who administered the *doctrinas* (Christian Indian villages). In the next century it existed particularly in the capitals of some bishoprics, but in Mexico City the presence of the superior authorities caused ecclesiastics to have more decorum.⁸¹ The denunciation was made in 1779 by a certain Francisco Rontal that various members of the clergy in Mexico City lived in concubinage and had children, but the archbishop stated that there was no ecclesiastic by the name of Rontal and that the scandal of concubinage among the clergy was not frequent.⁸² The bishop of Oaxaca reported in 1786 to José de Gálvez that there were three hundred and sixty-five clergymen in his diocese, more than half of whom, on account of infirmities, vices, bad temper, inefficiency, and lack of instruction, only served to try the patience of their prelate. The twenty-two languages spoken there, the great distance of the people from the *doctrinas*, the constant dissensions of the priests with the *alcaldes mayores* and the Indians made it very difficult to carry on religious work. In four or five parishes the natives drove the priests from their houses and set fire to some of them. The bishop feared that the time would come when he could not find priests for his jurisdiction, since many of them already regarded the ministry with disgust and horror and feigned illness to keep from being appointed to the parishes. He said that "a bishop without clergy, or with many useless and vicious ecclesiastics, is the same as a general without soldiers."⁸³

Fray Josef de Santa Gertrudis y Cárdenas complained that the religious orders established in Mexico for the benefit of its inhabitants had decayed so much that some communities were almost useless and others were nearly as bad. Of the number of religious maintained by the state scarcely

⁸¹ Alamán, I, 69.

⁸² Alonso arzobispo de Mexico al Señor Dn. Antonio Ventura de Taranco. Mexico, Feb. 26, 1779, AGI, 2628 (96-6-21). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁸³ Bishop of Oaxaca to the Marqués de Sonora. Oaxaca, March 21, 1786, AGI, 1876 (92-3-16). Audiencia de Méjico.

one-fifth served and among the secular clergy one-third did not fulfill their obligations because they were content to employ substitutes, thus the people lacked spiritual nourishment. He declared that they founded seminaries for the instruction of the youth, but in the towns there was great ignorance of the Christian doctrine, and young people had to go to distant places at much expense to study.⁸⁴ The bishop of Valladolid notified Antonio Porlier, in 1789, concerning the scandalous lives of three ecclesiastics in his church—Manuel Yáñez, Diego Suárez Marrero, and Nicolás de Villanueva. He asked that the latter be removed to another church where perhaps he would commit less evil. Suárez and Villanueva had tried to stir up the intendant against their prelates, the dean, and chapter of the cathedral.⁸⁵

In 1792 Díaz de Salcedo complained to the great Revilagigedo that the parish priests of the intendency of San Luis Potosí were indifferent, allowed many families to separate voluntarily from matrimony, and imposed heavy parochial dues upon the poor for baptisms, marriages, and burials.⁸⁶ Nicolás Guerrero was said to have discarded his religious garb for clothes of silk in which he preached, performed religious services, and attended *fandangos*. He was never heard to pray for divine mercy, he advised two married people so badly that their marriage had sad results, he levied excessive parochial dues on a poor man in Oaxaca, and in some towns he stirred up the Indians against their prelates.⁸⁷ The guardian and the religious council of the

⁸⁴Fray Josef de Santa Gertrudis y Cárdenas, Carmelita descalzo, á Floridablanca. Puebla, Oct. 28, 1787, AGI, 1879 (92-4-3). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁸⁵Obispo al Señor Don Antonio Porlier. Valladolid, May 19, 1789, and June 15, 1789, AGI, 1892 (92-4-16). Audiencia de Méjico; Testimonio del quaderno num. 22, officios de la via reservada supremo consejo, y Exmo. Sor. virrey, sobre la causa criminal seguida contra el Sor. prevendado Dn. Nicolás de Villanueva. AGI, 2634 (96-6-27). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁸⁶Relación de las mas principales disposiciones económicas. San Luis Potosí, Dec. 4, 1792, papeleta 77, AGI, 89-6-19. Audiencia de Méjico. BL.

⁸⁷Testimonio de las diligencias practicadas de orden del Sor. governador intendente interino de la plaza de Vera Cruz sobre la conducta del R. P. Fray Nicolás Guerrero religioso Carmelita calzado . . . 1794, AGI, 2646 (96-7-12). Audiencia de Méjico.

college of San Fernando of Mexico complained of the prebendaries Bernardo Gaena and Benito Axandri on account of their insubordination, excesses, lack of religion, and because they disturbed others. They requested that the unruly ecclesiastics should be sent to Spain, since in no other manner could peace be established in the college.³⁸ The religious discords in Michoacán were reported after 1798. Two parties were formed which caused spiritual unhappiness and the dissensions of both groups increased. The ease with which ecclesiastics were admitted into the province on the pretext of true or apparent illness, climate, and other excuses was regarded as the cause of the disturbances. Many individuals from the colleges had emigrated into the province and were placed in distinguished offices;³⁹ thus it seemed that the more aggressive ecclesiastics had gathered for some time in the province which became the nucleus of the revolution.

The year 1800 witnessed many irregularities and commotions in the church of Mexico, which showed that discipline was becoming more lax and ecclesiastics were more unruly. In that year the substitute priest Gregorio Saabedra in the town of Petatlan in the intendancy of Valladolid, armed with a knife, violently extracted from the royal prison and from the stocks Francisco Solís, leaving the doors open for the other prisoners to escape.⁴⁰ The priest of the town of Gerequaro and his lieutenants or vicars committed grave excesses and inflicted cruel lashes and other extraordinary punishment upon the Indians. The priest Lucas Antonio Rosados of the town of Tamasunchale took away from a lieutenant of justice a prisoner whom he was conducting to the prison of the chief city of Tancahuizt; the priest carried weapons and he came out of the town

³⁸Consulta del consejo de las Indias. July 4, 1796, AGI, 2542 (96-3-27). Audiencia de Méjico.

³⁹Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Dec. 23, 1802, AGI, 2544 (96-3-29). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴⁰La sala del crimen de Mexico da cuenta á V. M. con testimonio de la causa formada al cura de Petatlan por la extracción violenta de un reo de la carcel publica . . . Mexico, Oct. 29, 1800, AGI, 2682 (97-1-25). Audiencia de Méjico.

more than a league with six other armed men to wait for the royal official. In the town of Zacalpan, Don Manuel de Castro violently snatched a woman prisoner away from the royal justice; and Manuel Baptista and Josef Nava were accused of rape. The priest Juan José Simón de Aro of the parish of Cusamala took possessions from the brotherhoods in his doctrina; he said from the pulpit that he could manage the goods of the organizations despotically and the secular judges could not hinder him. José Iglesias, lieutenant of the priest of the partido of San Antonio Hue-tusco, cruelly beat the Indian sacristan of the town of San Francisco Escotepeque, Francisco Xavier, for a common crime which did not belong to the ecclesiastical jurisdiction; he took from her horse Feliciana María, maltreating her and ordering four dozen lashes to be given her because she cried without ceasing when she thought her husband was being whipped. Dionisio Martín, her husband, was imprisoned without any motive. The assistant priest Manuel Marteos of the town of Sinacantepec got into a fight in which he caused two deaths and serious wounds. Francisco Sequa, assistant priest of Tulantongo, extracted three teeth from an Indian to punish him. The priest Cayetano Izquierdo of Iscatiopan unjustly imprisoned a woman, Lina Micaela, in his house. The assistant priest Ignacio Albares of the doctrina of Maliltenango not only inflicted blows upon the Indian José Marzelo but caused unnecessary bloodshed, he imprisoned people without cause, and exacted fines from individuals of both sexes. In the two years in which he lived at San Cristóval Tepexoxuma Miguel Valverde did not wear his ecclesiastical garb, study, or perform any services of the church. He did not have a benefice or chaplaincy but lived at the expense of his mother and brothers with much extravagance. He was continually drunk, to which was attributed the homicide which he committed upon Francisco José Tobar, an inhabitant of the same town, mortally wounding him with a dagger thrust. The vicar of Tepecuacuilco violently resisted the justices who guarded various criminals guilty of serious crimes so that they fled

to the church for refuge and from there they escaped and were never caught again.⁴¹

Some religious refused to live in convents and committed disorders outside of them. A certain Joseph Anastasio Carcanio of the order of San Diego lived for more than a month in the town of San Martín Tescmeluca at the home of some women whom he said were under his charge, although there was a house of his order in that locality. This excess was carried on by some members of the orders for entire years.⁴² Those who remained within the walls of their cloisters committed abuses and caused disturbances. The fiscal of Mexico City, Antonio Gómez, reported the misdemeanors of the religious at musical concerts held in the parlors of convents. They ended with dances between the parents and guests, the door remaining open until eight or nine o'clock in the evening. It resulted that more than four thousand pesos of the endowment were spent for refreshments, therefore Gómez suggested that such functions should take place in the morning.⁴³ The regulars of both sexes caused disorders in the capital and other cities when fiestas occurred. They invited the people who lived near their temples to illuminate the balconies of their houses on the eve of those celebrations which lasted until two and three o'clock in the morning, at which time they played drums, whistled, shouted, and rang bells so that even the occupants of the viceregal palace were annoyed and sleep was driven from the eyes of the sick and honorable families; therefore the viceroy asked the fathers of Mercy to abstain from such fiestas and he gave orders that no regiment was to play music for them, but the disturbances did not cease.⁴⁴

⁴¹Copias de resptas. fiscales. Mexico, 1800, AGI, 2679 (97-1-22). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴²Arzobispo de Méjico al rey. Mexico, Nov. 25, 1804, AGI, 2556 (96-4-12). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴³Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, Dec. 17, 1804, AGI, 1795 (91-7-5). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴⁴José Moreno y Sanabria al rey. Mexico, Oct. 6, 1817, AGI, 2701 (97-2-17). Audiencia de Méjico.

There were always some men in religious houses in Spain who were better fitted for the work of the pioneer than the monotonous routine of ecclesiastical exercises, consequently such men were attracted by the opportunities of America for a more adventurous life, hence they responded eagerly to the call for missionaries. Their expectation of freedom was usually realized in the distant colonies when they became parish priests. In that office they were removed from the supervision of their monastic superiors and the result of their independence led them into temptations which they could not withstand due to their lack of training. They did not perform their duties properly and many of them led immoral lives which evoked continuous protests from the zealous members of the church.

One of the chief criticisms of priests was their utter neglect of their Indian parishioners. There were many towns where the Gospel had never been preached, and priests did not teach or explain the Christian doctrines, at least every Sunday and on feast days, as the laws required. It was very necessary that the youth should be instructed in religion, since they would remember it and afterwards teach it to their children and families. Doctor Manuel Antonio Sandoval, canon of the metropolitan church of Mexico City, said that many priests were not suitable persons for the cure of souls; they were generally preachers who went begging through the towns and were of a conduct little fit for the instruction and education of the youth, since they only perverted them. The Indian fiscals to whom they intrusted the instruction of the youth were usually as ignorant as the school children themselves. Those men maltreated and whipped the Indians because they did not know the doctrine, when it was not their fault. Such procedure was not in accord with the leniency of the church and was expressly prohibited by the laws of the Indies. Sandoval added that priests should not teach and preach by word only but by example, for this was what the natives needed more than anything else because of their crude nature.

The priest too frequently gave the Indians a bad example

by the way he acted in cases of expected deaths. When an Indian came from a town to seek confession for his wife, father, or brother, he was rudely received by the priest who asked a thousand impertinent questions about the sick person. If this occurred in the afternoon, the priest would likely go out the next morning and when he arrived at the town the sick one had already died. At other times the priest dismissed the native messenger and excused himself on account of the bad weather or that he was indisposed and that the ill person was not in great danger. Perhaps he sent his vicar who did not want to go because he was poorly paid; therefore he went in a roundabout way and no doubt he was ignorant of the Indian language and had to confess the sick one through an interpreter, the priest who knew the tongue remaining contentedly at home. If the priest did go to the Indian town and found the ill person relieved, he lost his temper and reproached the red men as if those miserable creatures were supposed to know the nature of the sickness. When the Indians did not find a remedy for their troubles or when they observed the disagreeable disposition of the priests they did not resort to them again in cases of necessity and many died without confession.

Also when parishioners, particularly women, went to the priest to confess because of devotion, the ecclesiastic made them wait for hours in the church or gave them advice by means of his Indian *semaneros* (natives who assisted the priest by the week), who answered them rudely or did not dare to aid them for fear of the priest. The parishioners became tired of waiting and returned to their houses very much discouraged; the result was that devout persons ceased to be devout and they murmured against the priests. Sometimes priests administered extreme unction to the ill when they were not in danger of death, thus making the sacrament of no effect. Sandoval stated that nothing degraded the Indians so much as the greed of priests who were very hard on the poor; therefore more natives died of hunger than of disease. Those ecclesiastics followed their own interests and carried on commerce, although the laws pro-

hibited this, instead of being pastors, fathers, and protectors of the Indians—those were sufficient causes for the natives to abhor them. Sandoval believed, as Father Acosta and other authorities did, that the stubbornness of the Indians in resisting the faith should not be attributed to them, but to the bad example and carelessness of their priests, and that bishops committed a great sin when they appointed as priests ignorant men who did not know the language of the natives or how to say mass and administer the sacraments.⁴⁵

In Oaxaca there were innumerable towns which saw a priest only three times a year and others twice; on many occasions it was necessary to seek the holy sacraments six and eight leagues and even ten and twelve with great hindrances. Due to those inconveniences many recently born died without baptism on account of the ignorance of their parents and others entered eternity without confession. Francisco Antonio Rivera said that formerly the Indians contributed to the priests the obventions and what was demanded willingly, but later they resisted the contributions on account of their unfortunate condition and lack of means; this showed that the priests were losing their hold on them.⁴⁶

There were only nine bishoprics in all New Spain and they each had nine thousand or sixteen thousand square leagues, when in Spain there were eight archbishops and thirty-eight bishops for a much smaller territory; consequently a bishop as good as Saint Paul or Saint Thomas could not have visited his diocese frequently to watch over the conduct of his priests, to see that they performed their duties faithfully, and instructed their parishioners in Christianity. Therefore José María Quirós maintained that religion, humanity, and public welfare required that the bishop-

⁴⁵Dr. Manuel Antonio Sandoval, *Reflexiones sobre la naturaleza y caracter de los Indios, opresiones que padecen, sus pocas medras en materia de religion, la causa de ellas, y modo de remediarlas*. AGI, 1778 (91-6-13). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴⁶Francisco Antonio Villanasa Rivera, *el ministro tesorero de aquellas caxas*. Oaxaca, April 22, 1793, AGI, 1782 (91-6-17). Audiencia de Méjico.

rics should be divided. As educators the members of the clergy were not as great a success as was expected. Often the ecclesiastical teachers of rural schools were very ignorant and confused in their Christian doctrines. No poor woman could read or write and men could only do it very badly. The Indians had not learned Spanish after three centuries, for the ecclesiastics wanted to keep them ignorant as brutes, and they corrected them with blows like children. The most cultured cities likewise lacked methodical instruction in the rudiments of education.⁴⁷

The exemplary Abad Queipo declared that on account of the little vigilance of the ecclesiastical government and because of the misunderstood piety of the faithful who did not listen to or obey the commands of the church, many persons of bad habits entered the clergy without education, talents, or virtues, and without ideas of the honor, dignity, and holiness of a priest. They regarded their personal immunity, which should have been a stimulus and reward of virtue, as a shield for their license. The good bishop said that there were twelve hundred ecclesiastics in his diocese who were seculars, but only five hundred held administrative positions and at least five hundred had no occupation and lived in indigence. He thought that it was an injury to the church to have more ecclesiastics than were needed, since the excessive number caused idleness and disorder. Religious ends could not be met when all the clergy were not well instructed and did not possess permanent benefices which would assure them an honest occupation. The worthy man believed that no one should be admitted into the clergy without a good education, good life and habits; at least everybody should have attended a clerical college for the last months preceding his admission to higher orders.⁴⁸

Juan Cruz, bishop of Guadalajara, did not have many

⁴⁷José María Quirós, Memoria de ynstituto en que se manifiesta, que ni España ha adquirido con la posesión de las Americas las grandes ventajas de que eran susceptibles. . . Vera Cruz, Dec. 31, 1812, AGI, 2516 (96-3-11). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴⁸Queipo á sus diocesanos. March 7, 1811. In *Papeles varios*, 12, num. 9, pp. 3-7.

complaints against his clergy, except that he reported to the king that the cabildo of his church followed the practice of applying the daily distributions called *quotidianas* to the members who were absent for the purpose of recreation. He said that the members took three months vacation every year and some of them six continuous months—the last three of the old year and the first three of the new year. The usage was common in all the cathedrals of Mexico, but the bishop thought that the practice was not a good one because it defrauded the rules relative to the residence of ecclesiastics. Yet the custom could not be abolished without causing much opposition and dissension.⁴⁰

There were great rivalries among the gachupines and creoles in the religious orders due to birth, and some communities were composed almost exclusively of one or the other.⁴¹ The quarrels became so noisy that the plan of alternation in the election of prelates had to be adopted, some were chosen first from one party and then from the other for a definite period. On July 9, 1790, a serious riot occurred in the convent of San Francisco in Mexico City, caused by the seizure of the guardian, Friar Mateo Jiménez a gachupín, by his enemies. The European and the creole ecclesiastics finally came to blows and it required a military force to release Jiménez after his captors had twice refused to obey the orders of Viceroy Mayorga.⁴² The creoles felt slighted because they did not hold more positions in the Mexican church, and they especially coveted the higher ones. In some cases the creole clergy were well provided for, as in the city of Oaxaca in 1786, at which time all but two of the ecclesiastics were creoles and natives.⁴³ The liberal Queipo was not afraid to employ them in his bishopric and at times it seemed that he preferred them to Euro-

⁴⁰Juan Cruz to the king. Guadalajara, Jan. 17, 1885, AGI, 104-7-17. Audiencia de Guadalajara. BL.

⁴¹Alamán, I, 70.

⁴²*Documentos para la historia de Mexico* (Mexico, 1853-1857), "Diario de Gómez," serie 2, pt. VII, pp. 89, 91-92.

⁴³Obispo de Oaxaca al marqués de Sonora. Oaxaca, March 21, 1786, AGI, 1876 (92-3-16). Audiencia de Méjico.

peans. When he recommended the most deserving ecclesiastics of his diocese to the king on December 22, 1814, Queipo mentioned thirty-eight American-born ones and only fifteen Europeans.⁶³

Some of the irresponsible members of the clergy committed crimes of a serious nature, but their frequency was no doubt greatly exaggerated, as is the case even to-day in all countries. The criminal chamber of the audiencia of Mexico gave account on September 30, 1790, that an atrocious crime was committed in the convent of La Merced in the capital. Friar Jacinto Miranda, a member of the convent, killed his commander, Gregorio Corte, and severely wounded the vicar and master of the novices, Josef Alcalá. Miranda was taken to the court prison where he was guarded, and the alcalde, Francisco Saavedra y Carvajal, feared that the doctrines of classic authors had influenced the crimes of ecclesiastics.⁶⁴ The robbery in Mexico City in December of 1797 inflicted upon a collector of the royal lottery from whom five hundred pesos were taken and another theft of three thousand pesos in money and jewels from a wine shop at night were discovered to have been committed by ecclesiastics who had taken sacred orders.⁶⁵ In 1798 Ignacio de la Santísima Trinidad, a Carmelite in the convent of Oaxaca, whose conduct was irreligious inside and outside of the cloister,⁶⁶ and, in 1809, Juan José Guerra, a canon of the church of Oaxaca, wronged two women.⁶⁷ Such crimes were the exception rather than the rule among eccle-

⁶³Abad Queipo al rey. Valladolid de Michoacán, 22 de Diciembre de 1814, AGI, 2568 (96-4-23). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁶⁴Consulta del consejo de Indias en pleno de dos salas á 15 de Abril de 1791. AGI, 2542 (96-3-27). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁶⁵El fiscal de lo criminal de la real audiencia de Mexico da cuenta á V. M. con documentos de las resultas de dos recursos de fuerza introducidos y determinados en la causa que se sigue contra Dn. Luis Marubanda y Dn. Agustín Frageiro. . . Mexico, Sept. 26, 1799, AGI, 2679 (97-1-22). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁶⁶El fiscal de lo civil de la audiencia de Mexico reclama la declaración que hizo aquel tribunal sobre los recursos de fuerza que promovió con motivo de la causa formada á Fray Ignacio de la Santísima Trinidad. . . Num. 2, Jan. 28, 1799, AGI, 2647 (96-7-13). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁶⁷Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Cádiz, Jan. 29, 1812, AGI, 1146 (88-1-9). Audiencia de Méjico.

siastics; laymen always committed many more crimes than the members of the clergy.

Abad Queipo said that the judges of the *sala del crimen* (criminal chamber) of the audiencia spoke of the frequency of the atrocious and scandalous crimes of the clergy. He then tried to prove that among the 8000 or 9000 secular and regular ecclesiastics in Mexico there were only found three or four who committed atrocious crimes in a period of ten years. There was the crime of an ignorant religious of Guadalajara who committed rape, Miranda, a member of the Order of Mercy who, when intoxicated, killed his commander, Ruiz, subdeacon of the same order who robbed the church of San Francisco in Valladolid of some jewels of silver, the subdeacon, Zolo, a madman, did violence to a child who was his cousin, the deacon Frajeiro and the subdeacon Marulanda in urgent necessity were guilty of a simple robbery, and the priest Vera committed the crime of high treason—those six ecclesiastics were the only ones to whom atrocious crimes could be attributed. From this number the drunkard and the madman, who were not responsible for their deeds, and the two authors of the simple theft might be deducted; therefore it should not be said that the clergy often committed enormous and atrocious crimes. The bishop declared that among the twelve apostles there was one traitor and it was not strange that among 8000 priests there should be found six or eight criminals, nor would it have been extraordinary if there were six hundred and sixty-six. He believed that the frequency of the crimes of ecclesiastics could only be determined when compared with those of laymen of a proportionate number. In the period of ten years mentioned there were three thousand robberies by lay adults but not more than three among the equal number of ecclesiastics considered; thus this crime was a thousand times more frequent among seculars. It could be proved also that in the same time two thousand laymen committed homicides as compared to two among the clergy, and among all other crimes there existed a larger number of secular than of ecclesiastical criminals. Queipo main-

tained that the clergy naturally was less delinquent than laymen because its members were less subject to the defects of human nature due to their high offices, the sanctity of the ministry, their communication with God, and their occupation in holy things. Moreover the clergy was a chosen group on account of their birth, education, customs, and good conduct. Because of good motives, Queipo thought that the clergy voluntarily subjected itself to the laws and identified itself with the interests of the sovereign.⁵⁸

That there were too many ecclesiastics and not enough positions for them was one of the later complaints against the religious system in Mexico. In the bishopric of Mexico it was reported in 1815 that there were five hundred clergymen without positions every year. Many chaplaincies worth three thousand pesos were established, for which a multitude of priests were ordained who could not subsist in them, yet most prelates did not see the inconveniences of this. The members of the secular clergy were not well distributed throughout the country; there were more in Mexico City than in all the rest of the archbishopric. They tried to isolate the regulars in their convents, put priests in their jurisdictions, and they desired to destroy the monasteries. There was the same lack of positions for the too numerous religious. The bishoprics were so large in extent that three could have been made from each one, but then the problem would have been how to maintain some of them financially. The bishopric of the New Kingdom of León, divided from that of Guadalajara and Durango, was believed never to be capable of supporting a church and that its bishop would always be poor. The bishops scarcely ever visited their vast territories because of bad climate and roads, thus the priests lived without fear of them and the people who resided in inaccessible places without spiritual food. Bernardo de Pueido believed that the remedy would be to restore the friars to the parishes, proportion the pensions relative to the number of ecclesiastics in each bishopric, and divide the

⁵⁸"Representación sobre la inmunidad personal del clero." Valladolid, Dec. 11, 1799. *In* Mora, I, 45-46, 48-50.

bishoprics.⁶⁰ The celebrated Abad Queipo also thought that the number of ecclesiastics had been increased excessively when there were not sufficient positions for all of them; hence many of them were without benefices or fixed residence and certain means of subsistence. The bulk of the members of the clergy were assigned to collective chaplaincies, some of which did not have fixed income and were frequently abolished. All that they had to do in those positions was to say mass at the price of eight reales. In the bishopric of Michoacán there were also always five hundred ecclesiastics without occupation and they had a natural tendency toward idleness. Queipo believed that the clergy could never fill the purposes of its divine institution when some of its members were not honestly employed in permanent benefices from which they could earn a livelihood.⁶⁰

The good work of the Mexican clergy, which compensated for many of its deficiencies, cannot be omitted. The loyal Queipo affirmed that, as in Spain, the clergy performed its religious and civil functions with zeal and dignity, supported universities, colleges, schools, and hospitals with its revenues, extended arts and sciences, was master of the youth, maintained one-third of the youth in the career of arms, letters, magistracies, and judgeships, aided widows and orphans, and helped the crown in all times of necessity—in war, famine, and calamities. In 1786 and 1790 the bishop, San Miguel, and the cabildo of the church of Valladolid exhausted their resources to aid the people. The bishop mentioned lost 46,000 pesos in the purchase of 50,000 fanegas of maize which he sold at less than cost to check the greed of the farmers and to avoid the death and misery of the unfortunate people who could not pay for that food at such high prices. The same prelate spent more than 100,000 pesos on the aqueduct of Valladolid after it was ruined, leaving the city without a drop of water. He

⁶⁰Bernardo de Pucido al secretario de estado y del despacho de gracia y justicia. Madrid, Oct. 14, 1815, AGI, 1155 (88-1-19). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁶⁰Queipo . . . á todos sus habitantes. . . Valladolid, March 7, 1811, AGI, 2383 (95-4-10). Audiencia de Méjico.

contributed to the construction of highways, bridges, and public works; he provided for the education of a considerable number of poor young people of both sexes. The bishop and cabildo of the cathedral of Valladolid furnished Charles III with 402,000 pesos, the next king 212,000 pesos, and the following one with 190,000 pesos for the wars with France and England.⁶¹

The missions, *par excellence* frontier institutions, still carried on their work, although, perhaps, not as effectively as earlier. According to a report of Viceroy Branciforte in 1796 there were one hundred and seventy-nine missions which functioned in the viceroyalty of New Spain.⁶² Buffon said that,

"The missions have formed more men in these barbarous nations than the victorious armies which subjugate them. . . The sweetness, good example, charity, and the exercise of virtue constantly practiced by the missionaries influence those savages to seek voluntarily the knowledge of a law which makes men so perfect. Nothing causes greater honor to religion than to have civilized those nations and formed the foundations of an empire without other arms than those of virtue."⁶³

⁶¹"Representación sobre la inmunidad personal del clero." Valladolid, Dec. 11, 1799. *In* Mora, I, 51-52.

⁶²Of those missions 21 were in Tampico and they received 146,260 pesos of sínodo from the royal treasury; 29 in New Mexico with a sínodo of 882,000 pesos; 10 in Nayarit (Nueva Galicia) with a sínodo of 285,000 pesos; 14 in one part of Sonora with 472,300 pesos of sínodo; 16 in Nuevo León (Zacatecas) with a sínodo of 134,000 pesos; 3 in Nayarit (Real de Bolaños) with 90,000 pesos of sínodo; 9 in one part of Nueva Vizcaya with a sínodo of 292,500 pesos; 18 in another part of Nueva Vizcaya with 540,000 pesos of sínodo; 9 in Nuevo León (Texas) with 450,000 pesos of sínodo; 8 in another part of Sonora with 245,000 pesos of sínodo; 6 in Coahuila with 315,000 pesos of sínodo; 4 in Nuevo Santander with 70,000 pesos of sínodo; 13 in Upper California with 1,040,000 pesos of sínodo from the Pious Funds; 18 in Lower California with 1,260,000 pesos of sínodo from the Pious Funds; and 1 in the archbishopric of Mexico with a sínodo of 35,000 pesos from the treasury. El virrey de N. E. marqués de Branciforte dirige estado respecto a las misiones. Mexico, Jan. 12, 1796, AGI, 1142 (88-1-5). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁶³Historia natural, tom. 6, p. 229. Cited by Queipo, "Representación sobre la inmunidad personal del clero." Valladolid, Dec. 11, 1799. *In* Mora, I, 53.

Queipo believed that the American clergy could well assume the title of preserver of the conquests and master of the conquered people. It instructed the Indians in the Spanish language, the doctrine of the church, and in morals, civilized them as much as the circumstances and the times permitted, founded Indian towns and hospitals, defended the natives against the oppression of the encomenderos, farmers, and *alcaldes mayores*, caused the promulgation of many of the royal decrees which favored them, and assisted them in epidemics and famines. The American clergy therefore was the only class, which because of its spiritual and civil benefits, obtained any ascendancy in the hearts of the people. The priests and their assistants who were devoted only to the spiritual service and temporal aid of the miserable classes won by their ministrations the affection of those people. They visited and consoled them in their infirmities, their ecclesiastical lawyers acted as intercessors with the secular judges for them, and they resisted the oppressions of the justices and powerful inhabitants toward them. Queipo said that ecclesiastics through the pulpit, the confessional, and their advice were the true guardians of the laws and the guarantors of their observance. They were the persons who had more influence over the hearts of the people and who worked more to maintain submission and obedience to the king. The good prelate thought that the clergy had special interest in the observance of the laws and in the royal government, since they received their positions and prerogatives from the king, and the higher the office the greater would be their adherence to the crown. The loyalty of bishops would thus exceed that of all others because they received more benefits from the sovereign. They were consecrated, they enjoyed the military honors of field marshals, they were frequently at the head of high tribunals, they held governmental commissions of the greatest confidence, they were treated with considerable respect and affection, and their prerogatives were recognized by the

laws; therefore with so many benefits they always regarded the royal interests as their own."⁶⁴

Juan Cruz, bishop of Guadalajara, gave a very good report in 1805 of the clergy in his diocese. They performed their duties punctually and attended mass daily; the priests, chosen for their good conduct and learning, cared for the needs of their parishioners, administered the holy sacraments, and instructed everybody in the Christian doctrine. The seminary of the convent was in a flourishing condition and more than one hundred youths, without counting the servants and secular students, were educated there under the direction of the rector, vice-rector, and eighteen masters of theology. The church maintained a number of schools in the bishopric of Guadalajara where even girls might receive instruction. There were schools for Spanish girls in Zacatecas, Sierra de Pinos, and Teocaltiche, but in the curacy of Tlaxomulco there were only two for the natives of the country. Schools existed in the Spanish towns and villages and also on the haciendas, but they rarely had a fixed endowment. Almost all of them subsisted on the contributions of pious inhabitants or of priests and when they lacked benefactors all instruction ceased. The Indian towns were in a much worse condition for they could only establish schools when the king allowed them to be supported by the community funds of each town. The bishop founded five houses of mercy and charity for the purpose of instructing children of all kinds and for the promotion of industry. Cruz said that religiousness, docility, and good customs were visible in all places of the bishopric, although there were occasional disorders among some individuals of the clergy just as there were among various people of the town, which he tried to check.

There were twenty-four convents of the regular clergy in the diocese and the good prelate declared that if their members were not as learned as they should be it was because they did not have a sufficient number of religious in

⁶⁴"Representación sobre la inmunidad personal del clero." Valladolid, Dec. 11, 1799. *In Mora*, I, 53-54, 57-58, 63.

their houses; this was especially true for the Order of Mercy of Lagos and Colima and for the Dominicans of Guadalajara. The regular priests and *doctrineros* were subject to the ordinary ecclesiastical jurisdiction in everything relative to the ministry of the parish and the bishop visited them without any hindrance. The convent of the Propogande Fide de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe of Zacatecas was mentioned as one of the most faithful and it had under its care many of the infidels of the provinces of Texas and Taramara. There were six convents of nuns who belonged to the Capuchin, Dominican, Carmelite, and Augustinian Orders under the inspection of the prelate. There were hospitals and brotherhoods, some of which pertained to the Spaniards and others to the castes and the Indians. The observant Cruz affirmed that the Indian hospitals did not deserve the name, since they were only places in which to deposit corpses. Their brotherhoods were disorderly meetings and the natives believed they were authorized to distribute the possessions of those organizations. To remedy the evil he thought that the king should provide that the Indian brotherhoods be put under the control of their respective priests and the priests under that of their prelates; also the funds of those societies should be kept for the special needs of the churches and for the use of the natives in case of pestilence or any other calamity, since medicinal facilities were lacking and epidemics wrought great ravages. The hospitals would be in a different condition if the prelates could freely take charge of and distribute the funds of the brotherhoods. Smallpox and leprosy were the most dreaded plagues and the bishop believed that some assistance from the government was needed to check them. Cruz thought that it would be good if the doctors of the capital and of the University of Mexico would decide upon some curative methods which could be communicated to each town by means of the justices and the priests as a precaution against the loss of life which was caused by ignorance. The people were very docile in accepting what

was truly beneficial to them as it was seen when they brought their children for vaccination.⁶⁵

The bishop of Nuevo León said that, with two or three exceptions, the clergy of his distant diocese were faithful and performed their many duties well. He cited the very zealous priest, Pedro Fuentes, of Saltillo as an example of goodness and industry. Although he was an old man in the last third of his life he discharged the functions of his ministry with the greatest enlightenment, he preached on every feast day and on other occasions during the year for his own devotion and the benefit of his parishioners, he visited and consoled all the sick, he aided the people with alms, and always tried to calm enmities without showing the slightest anger. There were many other ecclesiastics noted for their good work and conduct in the bishopric.⁶⁶

Immunities were all the privileges granted to churches and their ministers and were divided into local immunity, royal immunity, and personal immunity. The latter consisted of the sum of privileges and favors granted to persons consecrated in the secular and regular clergy—exemptions from contributions, personal service, and public duties, and the clerical fuero or the right to be judged by courts composed of members of their own body. The royal immunity included the authority which the sovereign gave to prelates to take cognizance of cases which were not rigorously spiritual on account of respect for religion and its ministers, also the dignity of the Spanish clergy who formed part of the noble estate, having authority, honor, and power as the nobility. Queipo thought that modern monarchies were founded on the two estates of the clergy and the nobility who assured the throne the subordination and obedience of the people because they served as mediators; therefore they deserved all the consideration and special privileges obtained. He admitted that in past times the

⁶⁵Juan Cruz to the king. Guadalajara, Jan. 17, 1805, AGI, 104-7-17 (Audiencia of Guadalajara). BL.

⁶⁶Primo obispo del nuevo reyno de León al Exmo. Sor. Marqués de las Hormazas, secretario de estado, y del despacho universal de hacienda. Monterrey, May 28, 1810, AGI, 3172 (99-7-11). Audiencia de Méjico.

clergy and nobility had abused those privileges with injury to the public welfare and the sovereign prerogatives, but those wrongs had all been remedied by wise ministers and laws. On the other hand, the good bishop believed that the excessive zeal of extending the royal jurisdiction produced many measures derogatory to the other *fueros*. For example, places of asylum were decreased and the worst criminals were excluded from them, likewise the exemption from contributions, which the possessions of the church enjoyed, were reformed. The churches of Spain and America contributed with their possessions to the public burdens of the state and the services of the king with thirds, subsidies, *excusados* (subsidies levied on the clergy), excises, tenths from land, *mesadas* and ecclesiastical half annates, *vacantes mayores* and *menores*, and acquisitions obtained after 1757 were subject to all the contributions belonging to other vassals. Pious donations to the church were usually made in money, since lands were scarce among the majority of the inhabitants, and they did not pass into mortmain. Yet the kings levied fifteen per cent on all the landed property and ordered the alienation and sale of rustic and urban estates which pertained to Pious Funds, *capellanías*, colleges, brotherhoods, hospitals, and other pious places. Queipo said that the royal immunity of the clergy of America was limited to the exemption from the dues of *alcabala* on the sale of its real estate which rarely happened; however the sale of land was thought to take place and that was the reason for the new imposition of fifteen per cent.⁶⁷

The extent of the jurisdiction of ecclesiastical courts in Spain was a source of much serious controversy ever since the thirteenth century, for it left to themselves those tribunals would have tried all cases connected with the clergy or church property. The secular courts objected to this because the church courts would not permit appeal to them. The ecclesiastical power was diminished much when a royal decree of October 25, 1795, allowed secular judges to

⁶⁷ "Representación sobre la inmunidad personal del clero." Valladolid, Dec. 11, 1799. *In* Mora, I, 10-17.

intervene in criminal cases of the clergy and have jurisdiction over them. The famous Abad Queipo spoke of the abusive and scandalous application which the sala del crimen of the audiencia of Mexico made of this jurisdiction in the cases which arose. He said that the personal right of the clergy was made illusory and was degraded, and when that body was humbled it was unable to discharge the duties of its high ministry to the people; therefore he requested that the immunity of the church of Valladolid should be maintained, first because ecclesiastical immunities were owed to the church and its ministers, second they formed part of the constitution of the monarchy and could not be excessively reduced without danger of changing it, and third the clergy was dishonored with injury to the public welfare and to the true interests of the king by diminishing the immunities by laws and the application made of them by the criminal chamber of Mexico City. The noble bishop declared that the appreciation and respect for religion and its ministers was very natural to man.⁶⁸

The personal immunities of the clergy in Spain and America were decreased to almost nothing and even ecclesiastical jurisdiction, which was respected in Spain until the beginning of the eighteenth century, almost perished and was scarcely recognized as a shadow of what it was. In America, according to Queipo's opinion, the royal patronage absorbed almost all the ecclesiastical jurisdiction. It took cognizance of the erection, union, and division of bishoprics and parishes, of what was connected with the churches, of the presentation of benefices and prebends, of proceedings and ceremonies, and of all that was included under the name of ecclesiastical discipline.

The bishops and their vicars were prohibited to intervene in cases of adulteries, concubinage, drunkenness, and other public disorders. The crimes of usury, simony, perjury, and sacrilege were also separated from their cognizance under the pretext of the question of the act and the insufficiency of

⁶⁸"Representación sobre la inmunidad personal del clero." Valladolid, Dec. 11, 1799. *In Mora*, I, 4-9.

ecclesiastical punishments. Cognizance over matters relative to tombs, burials, and funeral rights, over tenths of land, secularized tenths, subsidies, and excusados were likewise taken away from them. The ecclesiastical jurisdiction had cognizance only of the erection of buildings and the right of property of strictly religious benefices, which were not of the royal patronage, and was practically reduced to putting orders into effect and inspecting pious places. It could scarcely intervene in a case, except when it treated directly the nullity of marriage or divorce. The clerical fuero, on which had depended essentially the individual consideration of the ministers of the church, was diminished especially in civil cases. It had ennobled and distinguished them from the other vassals, protecting their honor and their life against the insults and injustice of an ignorant or malevolent judge; therefore the right to be judged by judges of their own class was the most precious possession of the clergy. Queipo affirmed that King Charles III reduced the civil fuero of the clergy for the welfare of the state, but ecclesiastics were still kept in a position of power, for their person and honor were defended and protected and their criminal fuero was preserved. He believed that the personal immunity of the clergy relative to the criminal and civil fueros was sufficiently diminished, however the *sala del crimen* by its application of the decree of 1795 tried to limit it still more.⁶⁰

In atrocious crimes the regulation allowed the joint proceedings of the ecclesiastic and secular jurisdiction, yet the laws did not define an enormous or atrocious crime and authors varied on the subject, hence the ecclesiastical jurisdiction was usually disregarded. On the other hand, the concept of crimes was affected by the uses and customs of the various nations at different times and the penalties admitted still greater diversity. From this great difference in ideas about crimes and their penalties, there was a powerful motive for the secular judges to try to take cognizance

⁶⁰“Representación sobre la inmunidad personal del clero.” Valladolid, Dec. 11, 1799. *In Mora*, I, 18-25.

of all ecclesiastical crimes; thus rivalries and discords resulted between the two jurisdictions. Queipo cited the case of the priest of Quinistlan, Manuel de Arenas, which the bishop of Puebla was handling, to show how the sala del crimen openly exceeded its power. First it qualified the crime of the priest as atrocious and enormous, then it ordered the intendant of Puebla to imprison him without the notice of the prelate, who was deprived of his jurisdiction over the criminal. The accused man was taken to the public prison of Puebla, placed among the wicked and more infamous, and insensible to humanity the sala denied him aid in a very grave infirmity. In all other cases the criminal chamber acted in a similar manner. In the case of José María Soria, a priest of Petatlan in the bishopric of Michoacán, the fiscal decided that the ecclesiastical judge did not have jurisdiction in concurrence with the secular judge in the cognizance of enormous crimes of ecclesiastics. This violated the law which attributed equal jurisdiction to the two judges. Queipo asserted that the sala del crimen did not have another object than the degradation of the American clergy and it pretended to decide in first and last instance about the atrocity and enormity of the crimes of ecclesiastics. It pretended that the church did not have power to impose grave penalties on ecclesiastics because, according to the ideas of that secular court, the punishment of perpetual retirement, fasts, and prayers were light and the clergy could only be corrected or improved by the wheel, the gallows, the knife, imprisonment with wicked delinquents, and by assigning them to the presidios. The abuse of power and authority increased with the distance from superiors, and the bishop feared that great excesses would be committed by subdelegates and their lieutenants in towns removed more than one hundred leagues from their immediate superior.⁷⁰

The Inquisition, supported for so long in its intolerant attitude by the faith of the people, sometimes exceeded the

⁷⁰"Representación sobre la inmunidad personal del clero." Valladolid, Dec. 11, 1799. In *Mora*, I, 35-39, 41, 43, 49, 64.

bounds of its jurisdiction and became arrogant toward the people and the government. The interests of the political administration and the Holy Office frequently clashed; also by its terrorism the Inquisition subdued the spirit of the common man and deprived him of independence in thought and action. The inquisitors were always, until 1813, very powerful persons in Mexico. They received a salary of 3140 pesos a year, besides the house where they lived; however they were not satisfied since they sent a petition to the Cortes by means of the viceroy asking for an increase in their salary.⁷¹

Finally the rigors of the Holy Office caused both secret and open hostility. In 1804 a certain Gregoyre, entitled bishop of Blois, proclaimed loudly against the Inquisition in a paper which he wrote. He said that the cry of liberty resounded in both worlds and in both there was open opposition to what the Inquisition preached, since nobody dared to speak freely on account of it and it kept alive the spirit of superstition. Learned men, he declared, were deceived by the existence of such an institution and that an archbishop could support it, after it had made another archbishop, Señor Carranza, groan. Gregoyre argued that the bishop could raise his voice against any abuse in the matter of religion and was equal to the Inquisition; that the institution had become a passive instrument of politics and the kings made use of it for other purposes than to punish heresy; that it should be abolished on the grounds of humanity for the same reasons that human sacrifice, the mutilation of men, commerce in negroes, and slavery were suppressed; and that the Holy Office had given exercise to a multitude of writers. He maintained that the first missionaries of the Gospel, imbued with the maxims of Christ, never pretended to subject the wills of people or fetter liberty because they knew that to violate conscience was to convert to hypocrisy. The gentleman was quite correct when he said that:

"Intolerance exasperates the spirits, increases the

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⁷¹Castillo Negrete, *México en el siglo XIX*, I, 53.

enemies of religion, without obtaining a single friend. . . . It is as impossible to captivate the understanding by blows as to cast a fortress on the ground by syllogisms. From the bodies nothing can be drawn out except grief and to wish to persuade the conscience with rigors is an undertaking which exceeds human forces."

A number of Christian authorities were then quoted to show that they did not approve of the methods of the Inquisition: Tertullian had declared that natural right guaranteed to each one the power of adoring what he wished and that to violate hearts was an action contrary to the Gospel. Athenagoras had insisted upon the freedom of the conscience and Saint Athanasius likewise laid down the rule that religion should be established by means of persuasion. Saint Chrysostom announced that it was not permitted to Christians to use force to destroy error and that the rules which should be employed for the salvation of men were sweetness and persuasion. Gregory the Great even said that the Turks must be considered the brothers of Christians; at the fourth Council of Toledo it had been recommended to the king that he be more indulgent than severe with delinquents. In view of those opinions of the church fathers, Gregoyre stated that the Inquisition was opposed to the brilliant spirit of the church; it was vicious in its instruction and forms, and there were innocent persons who had groaned in the prisons of the Holy Office. All people who had wise notions of what characterized judicial forms condemned the secrecy in which the Inquisition carried on its processes, for publicity was the safeguard of the integrity of a magistrate. The critic concluded that the Inquisition was a scandal to true Christians, a pretext for evil, and was already abolished in public opinion.⁷²

The abolition of the Inquisition was one of the first reforms of the revolutionists and it is to their credit that they

⁷²José María Gutiérrez de Rozas y Munive, *Impugnación de la carta que el ciudadano Gregoyre titulado obispo de Blois escribió á el Exmo. Sor. Inquisidor General de España, y el ciudadano Lastiere envió traducida á el Exmo. Sor. Principe de la Paz, sobre supresión del Santo Trivunal. AGI, 1800 (91-7-10). Audiencia de Méjico.*

saw in its destruction the initial step toward individual liberty and social progress. Finally the Cortes of Cádiz by a decree of February 22, 1813, published in Mexico on June 8, suppressed the Holy Office. The measure was gladly received since the tribunal and its ministers were regarded with contempt. The ayuntamiento of Vera Cruz gave thanks to the Cortes for having extinguished the obnoxious tribunal and declared that great would be the benefit to the nation generally.⁷⁸ The property of the institution was to be applied to the treasury for the reduction of the public debt. On June 9, an inventory was taken of the possessions and the building was thrown open to the gaping crowds, who gave free vent to their detestation of the Inquisition. The treasury received 1,775,656 pesos from the sequestrated wealth of the Holy Office and the archbishop asked for the prohibited books, which were given to him and stored in four rooms of his palace. The prelate kept the keys in his possession and nobody was permitted to enter the rooms except trustworthy persons in order to arrange the books and to make lists of them. The archbishop, who was an old inquisitor, immediately took charge of cases of heresy and prohibited writings. The two senior inquisitors left the country, but the junior, Manuel de Flores, remained, hoping for the reestablishment of the institution, which virtually took place when the fickle Ferdinand VII annulled the Constitution of Cádiz on May 4, 1814. Then before the Inquisition was reorganized, Flores began to collect evidence against Abad Queipo, although it was not until December 23, that Viceroy Calleja notified him to revive the tribunal. On January 4, 1815, a proclamation announced the restoration of the jurisdiction and property of the Holy Office. The institution however was in a sad state; the replacement of its possessions consisted mostly of promises, only 773 pesos of money were returned, and the buildings had to be refurnished. The tribunal was

⁷⁸El ayuntamiento dando gracias a las Córtes . . . para haverse extinguido el tribunal de la Inquisición. Vera Cruz, March 1, 1814, AGI, 1901 (92-5-9). Audiencia de Méjico.

thoroughly discredited, its jurisdiction was no longer respected, and disdain was shown toward it."⁶⁴

The case against the noted Queipo made evident the diabolic workings of the Inquisition which had outlived its usefulness. It was not strange that such an energetic and public spirited man as the bishop of Michoacán should fall into the clutches of the Holy Office. The root of the trouble seemed to have been Queipo's appointment to the bishopric of Michoacán, which was never confirmed by the pope due to the disturbances in Europe. Besides there was some jealousy toward him on the part of the inquisitors Bernardo de Prado and Isidoro Sáenz de Alfaro, the cousin of Archbishop Javier de Lizana y Beaumont. The head of the Mexican church at that time was a virtuous man and a descendant from a noble family of Navarre, but had little talent or learning and was weak and distrustful.⁶⁵ He it was who suggested Prado for the position of bishop of Michoacán in 1809, and he also mentioned Alfaro, however he said that he could not do without the assistance of the latter in his work.⁶⁶

Queipo was accused of two kinds of crimes, one relative to religion and the other to disloyalty. It was reported that he had a book entitled *Lettres à Eugénie* which was a complete course in atheism, and that he had intimate friendship with Hidalgo and the other chiefs of the insurrection in New Spain.⁶⁷ In a letter of May 10, 1811, the Inquisition of Mexico declared that he was a careless ecclesiastic and that the people and clergy of Michoacán asked for him as bishop because they agreed with his revolutionary ideas and

⁶⁴El arzobispo de Mexico al presidente y regencia de España y las Indias. Mexico, Sept. 1, 1813, AGI, 2556 (96-4-11). Audiencia de Méjico; Lea, *The Inquisition in the Spanish Dependencies*, 288-291. By a royal order of Sept. 16, 1815, the Jesuits were formally reestablished in Mexico with great ceremony, but in 1820 they were driven out when the military revolution forced the king to accept the Constitution of 1812. Calcott, *The Church and State in Mexico, 1822-1857*, p. 34.

⁶⁵Alamán, I, 70-71.

⁶⁶Propuesta del arzobispo virrey Lizana para la mitra de Valladolid. Mexico, Aug. 8, 1809, AGI, 2571 (96-4-26). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁶⁷Consulta de la Camara de las Indias. July 1, 1816, and Aug. 11, 1817, AGI, 2571 (96-4-26). Audiencia de Méjico.

in order to live irreligiously. He was even accused of provoking the rebellion and of having treasonable relations with the French.⁷⁸ When this letter was dated the Supreme Council of the Inquisition did not exist because of the French occupation of Spain, and the Cortes of Cádiz did not permit its reestablishment. The letter was not submitted to the archbishop of Mexico as was done with all other cases and documents of the extinguished Holy Office, but was kept by Prado and Alfaro for an opportune occasion. With it they attacked Queipo as soon as the tribunal of the Inquisition was revived in 1814, and he was denounced to the minister Lardizábal without another document except a copy of that letter. The inquisitors Prado and Alfaro well knew that Queipo was the first person to combat the insurgents and had excommunicated them before the Holy Office or any other prelates did. Queipo said that as soon as Prado became *decano* he constituted the Inquisition and controlled the other members; among the six lawyers who tried the case four were known in Mexico as indifferent and all were of weak character.⁷⁹ The Inquisition and the insurgents were thus both working against the bishop who was summoned to Spain in 1814, in order that the king might judge his merits and learning, as the royal order stated.⁸⁰

The Council of the Indies soon declared that on the question of disloyalty the merits of Queipo were found to be abundant and his fidelity could not be doubted.⁸¹ On January 24, 1816, the king therefore appointed him attorney-general, but on the 27th it was decided that he should not serve as *secretario de gracia y justicia* because of the case pending in the Inquisition. This was made public and Queipo was greatly dishonored in the nation.⁸² Matters

⁷⁸Carta de la Inquisición de Mexico de 10 de Mayo de 1811, AGI, 2571 (96-4-26). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁷⁹Queipo, Notas á la carta de la Inquisición de México de 10 de Mayo de 1811. Madrid, Oct. 7, 1818, *ibid.*

⁸⁰Consulta de la camara de las Indias á 29 de Noviembre de 1815, *ibid.*

⁸¹Consulta de la camara de las Indias á 1 de Julio de 1816, *ibid.*

⁸²Queipo, Notas á la carta de la Inquisición de 10 de Mayo de 1811. Madrid, Oct. 7, 1818, AGI, 2571 (96-4-26). Audiencia de Méjico.

became more complicated when the bishop elect asserted that the Holy Office did not have authority to try his case, since only the pope could take cognizance of cases of bishops.⁸³ The Inquisition immediately denied this and said that the right to have recourse to the Holy See only existed in his colored imagination because his appointment as bishop had never been confirmed.⁸⁴ The result was that the tribunal became more obstinate after its powers were questioned and it summoned Queipo to appear before it, but of course he refused to do this.⁸⁵ After repeated summons the Inquisition decided to use more drastic means; on June 8, 1816, Queipo was arrested at the entrance of his house, put into a carriage by force, and taken to the convent of Rosario by agents of the Holy Office.⁸⁶ There he remained for two months, since he still denounced the right of the Inquisition to try him.⁸⁷ His lawyer Miguel de Nájera tried to establish communication with him and to get him released on account of his advanced age and breaking health.⁸⁸ Finally Señor Campillo, as a representative of the Holy Office, came to visit Queipo on three occasions in order to persuade him of the competency of the jurisdiction of the tribunal and promised that, if he would recognize it, the case would be finished to his satisfaction in a little while. Queipo submitted to the Inquisition, the charges were ended so completely that no doubt remained concerning his innocence, and he was set free.⁸⁹

The clergy took a leading part in the revolutionary movement, but many adhered to the old régime; all other influences favorable to independence would have been futile without their aid. The people were especially guided by the lower clergy, some of whom were creoles, because of

⁸³Carta de Queipo al rey. Madrid, June 12, 1816, AGI, 2571 (96-4-26). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁸⁴Consulta de la camara de las Indias. Madrid, June 13, 1816, *ibid.*

⁸⁵Carta de Queipo al Señor D. Pedro Cevallos. Madrid, June 28, 1816, *ibid.*

⁸⁶Carta de Miquel de Nájera al ministro. Madrid, July 8, 1816, *ibid.*

⁸⁷Pedro Cevallos al obispo inquisidor general. Palacio, July 4, 1816, *ibid.*

⁸⁸Carta de Miguel de Nájera al ministro. July 22, 1816, *ibid.*

⁸⁹Queipo, Notas á la carta de la Inquisición de México de 10 de Mayo de 1811. Madrid, Oct. 7, 1818, *ibid.*

the traditional religious spirit which followed blindly what ecclesiastics told them. The priests in the villages and cities often utilized the pulpit to exploit the faith of the people for the Virgin of Guadalupe, the patron saint of the insurgents. The friars in their intrigues in the convents conspired against Spain in spite of the threats of prelates and persecution by viceroys. The case formed against the Augustinians, Suárez and Rivera who planned to imprison the viceroy, showed the plots going on within the cloisters. The conspiracy was prepared in the convent where women were invited to a musical entertainment; when the assembly was large the music was stopped and the work of sedition began by delivering strong discourses against Spain. The religious had evidently lost all respect for the government and the king.⁹⁰ The adherence of the clergy to the revolution varied with the different aims of the revolutionists. When the insurgents declared themselves to be supporters of Ferdinand VII, the majority of ecclesiastics zealously favored the plan; when the revolution meant the rejection of the king and the establishment of republics, it was impossible for the higher clergy to renounce their allegiance to the king, since they owed their appointments, promotions, and privileges to him, and they regarded themselves as agents intrusted with the execution of his ecclesiastical policy in America. The conservatism of the clergy had always been well known, consequently certain European statesmen believed that this would make a separation of the colonies impossible. The count of Ségur was received by the count of Vergennes after his return from America and in the conversation he stated that the Spanish colonies were drifting inevitably toward a revolt against Spanish rule. But Vergennes believed that a revolution would be impossible because of the ignorance of the inhabitants of the dependencies and the great power of the clergy.⁹¹

⁹⁰Germán Latorre, "La separación del virreinato de Nueva España de la metrópoli. *Revista de archivos, bibliotecas y museos*. July-Aug., 1914, pp. 137-138.

⁹¹Moses, *The Intellectual Background of the Revolution in South America, 1810-1824*, pp. 69-70.

The hatred of the creoles and Indians for the gachupines was so bitter that four-fifths of the native clergy cooperated with the cause of the insurgents in spite of the censure of the church, and questions of faith became closely involved in the struggle between the factions. The Spaniards declared that sacraments administered by rebel priests were invalid and the revolutionists would not recognize the rites performed by gachupines.⁹² Nevertheless, on the subject of slavery, ecclesiastics were usually in sympathy with the ideas of the revolutionists rather than with the practices of the old régime. From the beginning the insurgents endeavored to abolish Indian slavery; the greater part of the clergy was ready to accept this view, and they were among the first to free their slaves. The first spokesmen and leaders of the revolution had been educated for the priesthood, but they were in the lower ranks with little hope of advancement. Hidalgo, Moralos, and Torres are names dear to every Mexican heart for the gallant part their bearers played in the early revolution and the bravery with which they faced the excommunication and denunciation of those whom they had been taught to obey. Although the clergy was divided on the question of independence, with only the poorer group in favor of it, the viceroy proceeded to deal cautiously with the rebel priests because of the respect of the common people for all the members of that holy class. Both sides made use of sacred banners dedicated to the Virgin and thereby introduced the religious issue into their cause.⁹³

At first the members of the clergy whose exalted positions brought them into close contact with the higher governmental officials naturally opposed the revolution, but, when conditions changed in Spain in 1820 and assumed a more liberal aspect, also when the course of the revolution appeared to lead directly to independence, regard for their worldly welfare caused a considerable number of ecclesiastics to show sympathy for the party that was destined to

⁹²Lea, *The Inquisition in the Spanish Dependencies*, 280.

⁹³Callcott, *The Church and State in Mexico, 1822-1857*, pp. 32-33.

exercise power in the new state. The revolution of 1820 was therefore caused and begun by the clergy of Mexico City.

A law of January 4, 1813, which provided that unoccupied lands were to be distributed only with the distinct understanding that they were never to pass into mortmain, was revived. There was so much danger from such restrictions and losses of property that priests declared from their pulpits that the very existence of Catholicism in America demanded that Mexico be freed from Spain, because with a new government which they might help to establish, they would likely receive more liberal treatment and have more privileges. The declaration of independence issued by the rebels on November 6, 1813, now became a perfectly valid Catholic document, since it recognized Catholicism as the only lawful religion. Ecclesiastics like Pérez, the bishop of Puebla, the bishop of Guadalajara, who loaned money to the insurgents, the bishop and cabildo of Chiapas, conspired openly against Spain. Their purpose was to secure control of the independence movement for their own advantage and this change of attitude on the part of the clergy turned the scale of the revolution.⁶⁴

The conditions of the church which helped to pave the way for Mexican independence have been sketched. For many years the church had impressed itself so thoroughly on the minds of the people that its authority was unquestioned. So great was its wealth and influence, so thoroughly had the people of Mexico and other Latin American countries been trained in the habit of loyal submission to it, that as long as the church and the state acted together there was not the slightest chance of a movement for independence from the mother country succeeding. The ecclesiastical power was so intimately related to the political and social conditions that the Indians, after three hundred years of so-called Christian instruction, were almost as ignorant and miserable as before the Spanish conquest. While the ecclesiastics were willing to release the natives from physical bondage, they did not propose to give them freedom of

⁶⁴Callcott, 35-36.

thought. They attacked their ancient religious traditions, which had served them well, and tried to transform the element of their nature that was most unyielding. They were determined to recast the mind of the Indian in a new and rigid mould by methods which only made him more resistant and reserved. The Inquisition also endeavored to interpret the minds of the people, which it did not understand, and keep them true to the established mould. The result was that the tribunal spread a blight over the intellectual life of the colonies, it smothered the spirit of inquiry, and silenced the voice of reason. Finally the activity of the Holy Office engendered hatred among the people for the religious authorities of the country. This hostility was easily transferred to the political administration which had upheld the rigid religious system for so long.

Certain irregularities and abuses among the members of the clergy decreased respect for the church as an institution, notwithstanding its good work, but not for religion because the religious instincts of the people remained essentially unimpaired. The inequalities among the different classes of ecclesiastics aroused a sense of injustice as it did among other social classes. The church amassed a great amount of wealth during the colonial period and even before the revolution this aroused the hostility and covetousness of political administrators who began to pass laws to alienate the property and wealth of that powerful organization. The exactions of the church from the people were very high and they too became a source of discontent. The conflict of jurisdiction between church and civil courts also caused friction. For a long time the conservative clergy did indeed exercise a tremendous influence over the great mass of inhabitants of Mexico, however in spite of inadequate schools and the scarcity of books owing to the restriction of importation, a considerable number of individuals acquired knowledge and developed intellectually. It was this intelligent and progressive minority, as in other instances, who brought about the revolution.

VII

POLITICAL ADMINISTRATION AND ATTEMPTS
AT REFORM

The Spanish colonial administrative system was one of the most detailed and elaborate ever applied to dependencies, which if it could have been enforced exactly, would have been one of the most perfect. Unfortunately human agents, not always of the best type, were trusted to put it into effect and many mistakes were made; however, other nations drew inspiration and wisdom from it for the management of their overseas possessions. At first the system was vigorous enough and great viceroys employed it to meet the needs of the times, but it was quite rigid and could not adapt itself to the changing conditions of frontier life and society; therefore decay was inevitable. Naturally after two and a half centuries new problems and relationships arose and the old inflexible system became inadequate. The newborn spirit of democracy, with its progressive ideas, which stirred the new republic to the north and many countries of Europe soon infiltrated into Mexico and the inhabitants who belonged to a new generation began to express their discontent with the old régime and to demand the reforms which had long been necessary.

The able ministers of the wise Charles III, who commenced their struggle for efficient government immediately upon his accession, undertook many reforms in America, the greatest of which were the general visitation or judicial inspection of all the colonies, the widespread enlistment of colonial troops in bodies of militia for the defense of the wide realm, the adoption of practical free trade for Spanish ships, under the Grand Pragmatic of Free Commerce of 1778, the expulsion of the Jesuits from Spain and the dependencies in the interest of a regalistic control of every

organization of the state, and the establishment of the intendencies with the new code of laws for their regulation. Those reforms and especially the latter did accomplish good results for the colonies, making it possible for Spain to hold its distant possessions for another half century. But the reforms did not go far enough; there was nowhere visible in the enactment of the Ordinance of Intendants any appreciation of the need of evolving self-government, or greater well-being, through an evolutionary process of placing responsibility upon the colonial himself. Consequently the reforms were only temporary and everything gradually relapsed to its old state; procrastination and delay, corruption of officials, malversation of public resources, and non-observance of the laws again became the rule. With those conditions came a weakening of control over the distant frontiers and a general relaxation of the administration. Discontent gathered momentum, internal conspiracies multiplied, and the revolutionary period was duly inaugurated in New Spain.

The early grievances were many, as for instance, those connected with the *encomienda* system, but the royal tradition prevailed in America as strongly as in Spain and cast a glamor of exaggerated virtue and majesty about the king. The distance of the colonists from the royal presence magnified this sentiment in an age in which the halo of divinity still blazed around the throne, hence the people were willing to submit to a government imposed upon them without their consent. This attitude of reverence for royal authority restrained the people throughout the colonial period, even after they began to feel irritated and aggrieved by the restrictions and abuses which limited their freedom.

José Pablo Valiente, a citizen of Seville, said that Spain extended the territory of its possessions because of a desire for vain ostentation and power before it knew the country, the customs of the people, the nature of their productions, or any of the relations which would serve to establish the best form of government for the new colonies. He declared that Spain gave them laws already discredited in Europe,

for, when efforts were being made to extinguish the feudal system at home, it transplanted the remains of that institution to America under the name of *encomiendas*. This was necessary to satisfy the ambition of the warriors of that time who had served the kings with so much glory in the expeditions of Flanders, Italy, and in the conquest of Granada. It seemed necessary to give them rewards and an occupation analagous to their genius in order that they might continue the discoveries and conquests begun by Columbus. Since it was easier to imitate the system already known than to invent a new one, the Indians whom they reduced to obedience to the kings of Castile were given to them under the *encomienda* system.¹

The *encomenderos* were restricted more and more until a way was opened for the extinction of the *encomiendas*. The Indians were then put under the crown and the protecting laws acquired from day to day greater regularity and perfection until the general system of government was formed which was to rule and make prosperous those countries so privileged by nature, and the colonies became an integral part of the Spanish monarchy. In the seventeenth century there was a continuous struggle to suppress the boldness and greed of the *encomenderos* and the arbitrary exercise of authority by the public employees who abused their power to the injury of the natives. The provinces farthest away from the center of control suffered most from abuses of *encomenderos* and officials in the execution of the laws, their public administration was most burdensome and languid, and their prosperity most precarious. Those appointed to govern them easily neglected their duties, since distance insured impunity from punishment, and the people suffered the oppression in silence on account of the impossibility or serious difficulty of resisting it. Before the report of the crime or excess reached the ears of the sovereign or the supreme tribunals it was necessarily very serious and had caused much evil. Small excesses or complaints could

¹José Pablo Valiente, *Sobre sistema de gobierno de America*. Sevilla, Sept. 16, 1809, AGI, 141-5-11. Audiencia de Méjico. BL.

not be made the object of costly recourses; therefore the encomenderos and employees in the different branches of the government decreased the fortune and well-being of native families, often obliging them to emigrate and abandon their homes rather than endure their outrages.

A strong and absolute authority seemed necessary to check abuses and to direct the operations of the government; yet there might be inconveniences from this because if a stupid person would come to take possession of the administration and to satisfy his vanity or greed, he would easily oppress the people and could destroy in a moment the works of wisdom of many centuries and of many virtuous men. The centralized system of viceregal administration was nevertheless inaugurated, since it was believed to be the best means of control and efficiency. Fortunately the first viceroys who came to America ruled moderately at such a great distance from Spain and many of them were really great men worthy to be placed among the famous administrators of all countries.

The laws of the Indies made this system admirable; they united in a few hands the exercise of all authority and established at the same time a strict inspection over the operations of the chief executives. They gave to the tribunals the right of investigation and of reporting to the sovereign the abuses of power. They established appeals to the audiencias from the measures of the viceroys without decreasing the prerogatives of those superior chiefs. No magistrate dared to disregard the severity of the censure of those laws, the advantages of which were very great. The laws of the Indies established an equilibrium between the absolute power and legal equity; consequently there was no danger of uniting at the same time in the viceroys so many and different powers. Those executives approached the authority of the monarch as much as possible and enjoyed singular honors and prerogatives. They performed sovereign acts and in a word they were "*el alter ego*," a phrase which Spanish writers used to signify the fullness of power. The audiencias too were subject to those wise laws, and when

they did commit some injustice it was because their judges were men with all the weaknesses of their kind. Those high tribunals were under the vigilance of the Council of the Indies where ministers of advanced age, experience, and long careers judged impartially persons who were unknown to them for the most part. In the early days of viceregal administration the audiencias could serve therefore as successors to the viceroys when there was no *pliego de providencia* or the document in which a successor was designated.²

At first the laws worked well in America, but as time passed and many new conditions arose numerous laws of the monumental *Recopilación de leyes de los reinos de las Indias* became a dead letter and had to be supplemented by multitudinous royal cédulas to meet particular circumstances. Massive volumes of those decrees were accumulated and administrators had to consult them just as they did the laws of the Indies to see what the laws really were, since many decrees contradicted the codified laws.³ The delay and confusion in law enforcement became a serious problem and jurists of Spain and America began to realize the need for a recodification of the laws of the Indies, but this was postponed for many years.

The admirable administration of the early viceregal period languished when the kings became careless in the choice of their highest representatives in the New World. After the seventeenth century it was customary to appoint military men as viceroys and frequently they lacked administrative ability; they may have been efficient for battle or to direct a campaign, but not for political and administrative affairs because they did not know the country, and their stay in it was so precarious that they considered their office a step to another higher one. There were some who governed well and who would have done much more if death had not removed them. The caliber and efficiency

²José Pablo Valiente, *Sobre sistema de gobierno de America*. Sevilla, Sept. 16, 1809, AGI, 141-5-11. Audiencia de Méjico. BL.

³In New Spain alone 156 huge volumes of cédulas were collected by 1797. *Instrucciones que los vireyes de Nueva España dejaron a sus sucesores*, art. 10, p. 130.

of the eighteenth century viceroys greatly decreased; few of them were outstanding men and of the aggressive type like Antonio de Mendoza, the second Velasco, and Francisco de Toledo of Peru. Most of them were men of medium capabilities and some were quite weak. Positions as high as those of the chief executives in America had sometimes been sold to obtain funds for continental wars, a practice which probably accounts for a few of the worst viceroys. Villarroel declared that many viceroys returned to Spain with a very superficial knowledge of their viceroyalties and many were more interested in other affairs than in the duties of their office.⁴ They did not fear the *residencia*, or official investigation at the end of their term; one viceroy said "God is very high, the king is very far away, and here I am the master."⁵

The account of the appointment of the weak viceroy, Mayorga, is quite interesting. At the death of Bucareli, José de Gálvez had provided in the *pliego de mortaja* that the president of Guatemala should be viceroy; he supposed that his brother Matías would be the executive of Mexico, since he had appointed him president of Guatemala. Bucareli died however before Matías de Gálvez arrived in Central America, the judges of the *audiencia* worked with much speed and sent a message to Martín de Mayorga who governed Guatemala at that time, and Mayorga presented himself in Mexico on August 23, 1799, and received the office, defeating the will of the great minister of the Indies. Gálvez was exceedingly chagrined since he did not foresee such a circumstance and Mayorga had never been thought of for viceroy.⁶ Although a man of inferior capacity, Mayorga was of good character and did his best to govern well. The famous José de Gálvez was guilty of nepotism for he appointed his brother viceroy as soon as he could, but Matías de Gálvez was not much of an improvement

⁴*Enfermedades políticas*. . . MS, I, pt. II, p. 22-23. BL.

⁵Castillo Negrete, *México en el siglo XIX*. . . I, 35.

⁶Riva Palacio, II, 855-856, 869. A *pliego de mortaja* was the same as a *pliego de providencia*.

over Mayorga. He was an honorable and simple man of severe habits more fit for an epoch of peace than a stormy period of war and his administration lasted scarcely a year before he died. Then his son, Bernardo de Gálvez, the governor of Louisiana, who was quite a brilliant young man, succeeded; he too died prematurely and did not have much of a chance to test his powers as executive of New Spain. The early nineteenth century, when favoritism under the despicable Godoy was at its height, saw no improvement in the ability of viceroys.

The cumbersomeness of colonial administration increased more year by year, thus the work of a viceroy was continually augmented without adding to the efficiency of the government. The minute instructions of the mother country, which had a perfect mania for regulation, grew more detailed until it became impossible to put them all into effect. The endless red tape employed in viceregal administration inevitably detracted from its vigor and progressiveness, since the viceroy was dependent to a high degree upon his secretaries on account of the great complications of the gubernatorial functions which involved masses of papers, reports, expedientes, and opinions concerning the most insignificant matters. The very detailed accounts relative to all subjects of colonial administration which are now deposited in the Archives of the Indies add interest and color to the work of the investigator, but they also make modern administrators and legislators laugh. Such instructions and reports which consumed tons of paper and obstructed the wheels of the government likewise caused lax obedience to royal and viceregal orders. The well-known saying which characterized Spanish colonial administration, "I obey but do not execute (*obedezco pero no cumplo*), shows the spirit with which they were carried out. Procrastination, delay, and uncertainty became the rule for all officials. Sometimes four or five years elapsed before a royal measure was put into effect and by that time a new decree was necessary. The great Revillagigedo failed entirely to fulfil some of the royal orders within the five years of his term,

yet he was considered one of the most capable viceroys of New Spain.⁷ Many viceroys were so accustomed to the inertia of subordinates that their commands were often worded so as to leave a loophole; the less aggressive viceroys could enforce only those provisions not in direct opposition to the wishes of the local magistrates, who were apt to take their own time to effect the desires of the executive. The busy viceroy often placed the responsibility on the fiscal by a common time-saving form of decree, "Let it be as the fiscal requests (*Como pide el Señor fiscal*)."

The viceroys became greatly overworked by the middle eighteenth century because almost inhuman achievements were expected of them; their duties ranged from the highest administrative, financial, religious, military, and judicial functions of the supreme representative of the king in America to those of mentor and adviser of the people. The routine of their offices, alone, sometimes required from four to six hours daily. The celebrated Revillagigedo worked all day and part of the night, sleeping only three or four hours.⁸ Many individuals were ready to offer advice and suggestions to the viceroys, but few really aided them.⁹ The impression prevailed in Spain that a viceroy's work was easy, however few people stopped to think of how many of those high officials died in office or returned to Spain broken in health. True it was that in Spain a viceroy had many dependable assistants to aid him in the performance of his duties, whereas in America everything had to pass through his hands.¹⁰ The assistants whom the colonial viceroys did have often caused them more trouble and work, for even the judges of the audiencias, who were to be their right hand men, quarreled among themselves, with minor officials, and with the chief executives and embarrassed

⁷Manuel Rivera Cambas, *Los Gobernantes de México* (Mexico, 1872-1873), I, 487.

⁸Rivera Cambas, I, 486.

⁹*Instrucciones que los vireyes de Nueva España dejaron a sus sucesores*, 238.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, art. 2, p. 243. For further information concerning the functions of American viceroys see Fisher, *Viceregal administration in the Spanish-American Colonies*.

them by disputing their power. As a result viceroys were forced to depend almost entirely upon their secretaries and assessors, since they were always greatly handicapped by the lack of capable subordinate officials.

The corruption of minor officials was notorious, increasing with the distance from the seat of the highest authority. Governors of frontier provinces worked for their own advantage, tried to amass fortunes, and their interests were wholly self-centered just as among many other officials. The complaints against corregidores and alcaldes mayores, who engaged in trade, oppressed the Indians, and constantly had dissensions with ecclesiastics, were loud and incessant. Those men seldom had any money before they began to occupy their positions.

The alcaldes mayores, who governed divisions of each province called *alcaldías mayores*, were usually very dishonest. They were extremely poor and did not receive salaries; as a result, in order to make ends meet, they were forced to engage in trade, in which they tyrannized over the Indians, compelling them to work hard and to buy what they did not need from the provisions which the alcaldes were allowed to vend.¹¹ Those territorial justices contributed much to keep the natives in their wretched condition; however they were not considered judges as much as merchants. They were authorized to carry on commerce exclusively in their province and in the five years of their term they obtained from it 30,000 to 200,000 pesos.¹² This caused many vexations and frequently they were lax in the performance of their judicial duties, consenting, for a remuneration, to make the sentences of criminals lighter. It is estimated that the alcaldes took away from the Mexican treasury each year, by illicit operations and frauds in tribute collection, five or six hundred thousand pesos.¹³

¹¹*Documentos inéditos o muy raros para la historia de Mexico*, VII, 71-72.

¹²Abad Queipo, "Representación sobre la inmunidad personal del clero." Valladolid, Dec. 11, 1799. *In Mora*, I, 56-57.

¹³José de Gálvez, Informe y plan de intendencias que conviene establecer en las provincias de este reyno de Nueva España. Mexico, Jan. 15, 1768. MS, in the Ayer Collection, Newberry Library. The BL. has a copy.

When the *alcaldes mayores* advanced money to the Indians they collected interest and when they distributed goods to them under the *repartimientos* they made them pay more than the articles were worth. They did the same if the natives paid for the goods with the products of the land. If the Indians received four pesos' worth of goods they had to return six in cochineal, cacao, and other fruits of the land, which the *alcaldes* sold at advantageous prices. Dr. Antonio Sandoval said that those *repartimientos* had the pious title of favoring and encouraging the natives, but the real purpose of the *alcaldes* was to promote their own interests. They collected the products with lashes, imprisonment, and vexations even to the Indian women and children. As prisoners the natives could not work hence they suffered hunger. The prisons were terrible without windows or ventilation except the door; there were no beds and the keepers often forgot to give the inmates food or drink, therefore they died from hunger and thirst. Such outrages were the chief cause of their flight, for they preferred the deserts to those punishments. The *alcaldes* said that the Indians did not receive money, goods, or mules against their will; however those officials distributed articles which the natives did not need and which they took because of fear—spurs when they had no horses, hawk's bells, and other trinkets—which proved sufficiently that the Indians were forced to receive goods against their will. Since the *alcaldes mayores* were also ministers of justice, the door was closed for the natives to protect themselves and their rights. The *alcaldes* used all their efforts to prevent other merchants from trading with the Indians and they kept lieutenants in their stores who intimidated and burdened the red men, thereby violating the laws of the *Recopilación*, which provided that such lieutenants should not be appointed without permission of the viceroys. The Indians were compelled to serve in the houses of the *alcaldes*, become messengers, and tend their beasts in the fields, although this was prohibited by many municipal laws. They were likewise burdened and molested by the visitations

which those officials made through the towns of their district. On those occasions all of the inhabitants were put into movement; some took charge of the alcalde's baggage, others carried messages, and others caught chickens and obtained comestibles from the country. The purpose of the visitation was to benefit the poor Indians, but it was converted into an object of abuse and oppression. The *alcaldes mayores* walked through the houses of the Indians and they levied on the man who had a high bed, twelve *gallinas* of Castile, and six of the country, and two reales for the visitation, saying that the ordinance commanded this; if the Indian did not have those articles they imposed two reales as a fine because the ordinance required it. Sometimes the *alcaldes* went directly to the community houses and told the Indians that they had come to visit them and that they would be detained many days, but they did not want to inconvenience them. They promised that if each Indian of the town gave them two reales they would not make the visitation; when the money was paid they gave the Indians a paper which said that the visitation was finished. It is easy to see how such oppression accounted for the unprogressiveness of the Indians and caused their ruin.¹⁴

The *alcaldes mayores* were usually men of inferior intelligence, who freely appointed lieutenants of still lower station in life with no sense of honor to work for them in the smaller towns. According to the laws of the Indies, lieutenants of *alcaldes* were not to be natives or farmers of the districts in which they exercised jurisdiction because of the inconveniences that would result to the public cause and the good administration of justice, but like so many other laws there was a continual violation of this one.¹⁵ The few *alcaldes* who were of good birth, education, and honesty

¹⁴Sandoval, *Reflexiones sobre la naturaleza y caracter de los Indios, opresiones que padecen, sus pocas medras en materia de religion, la causa de ellas, y modo de remediarlas*. AGI, 1778 (91-6-13). Audiencia de Méjico.

¹⁵Ramón de Posada, fiscal de real hacienda de Mexico al Señor Don José de Gálvez. Mexico, March 13, 1784, num. 163, AGI, 1871 (92-3-11). Audiencia de Méjico.

were frequently so burdened with debts, contracted before obtaining possession of their offices, that they persuaded themselves that it was justifiable to enrich themselves with the royal tribute and revenues. Consequently they indemnified themselves for their labor, their expenses, the salary which they did not receive, and the half annate that was collected from them.¹⁶

There were a few people who believed in the *alcaldes mayores* in spite of their misdeeds. Abad Queipo said that they administered justice with disinterestedness and honesty in the cases in which they were not a litigant, and that they promoted industry and agriculture in the branches where it was needed.¹⁷ Francisco Antonio Villanasa Rivera, a treasury official of Oaxaca, maintained that the *alcaldes mayores* helped to remedy the evils of idleness of the Indians, the decadence of their excellent arts, practiced before the conquest, and their vices by giving them mules, bulls, money, and clothes. Although some *alcaldes* oppressed the natives, he thought that on the whole most of the Indians received benefits; they paid for the articles received and met all other financial obligations. They were able to support their families with more convenience and to promote commerce, therefore great utility resulted for the people and the treasury. The *alcaldes* obliged the red men to work, prevented drunkenness, and frequently visited all their towns without burdens to the people. The natives received daily wages and the farmers were able to cultivate the land and raise cattle with their aid. Rivera declared that the loans to the Indians made them exert themselves and in times of scarcity they had plenty to eat.¹⁸

Under the Bourbon régime the badly needed reforms for

¹⁶José de Gálvez, Informe y plan de intendencias . . . de Nueva España. MS, BL.

¹⁷"Representación sobre la inmunidad personal del clero." Valladolid, Dec. 11, 1799. *In* Mora, I, 57.

¹⁸Dn. Francisco Antonio Villanasa Rivera. El ministro tesorero de aquellas caxas. Oaxaca, April 23, 1793, AGI, 1782 (91-6-17). Audiencia de Méjico.

Spain and America were seriously undertaken because the abuses had become so glaring. Energetic measures were taken to centralize the administration after the French fashion and some of them were applied to America by the able ministers of the great Charles III. In the New World the two conspicuous political reforms of that wise monarch were the general visitation and the systematization of the colonies by erecting them into uniformly governed intendancies in place of the old kingdoms, provinces, governments, and the like; this reorganization was especially directed toward reform of the fiscal system and increase of the revenues so as to provide money for all the other reforms. The intendant system was first employed in Havana in 1764 as a kind of experiment and, since it did not have any bad effects there, the sovereign decided to extend the new model of administration gradually to all the viceroyalties. On January 15, 1768, Visitor Gálvez and Viceroy Croix signed the Plan for intendancies in New Spain, which received royal approval with the reservation that sufficient time should be taken to choose suitable men for the new positions.¹⁹ The Plan was then put into effect provisionally in some of the frontier provinces, and in October of 1777 a *junta* was convened to redivide the *alcaldías mayores* and to decide which of those divisions should be included in each intendancy. The boundaries for the intendancies of New Spain were all mapped out and a report was sent to the king.²⁰ After the establishment of the intendancies in the viceroyalties of La Plata and Peru, the famous Ordinance of Intendants for New Spain was promulgated in 1786. This Ordinance was to replace all former Ordinances of Intendants and was to apply to the other parts of Spanish America as far as conditions would permit. It was an attempt to supplant the laws of the Indies, simplify them, and make them workable. In the new code the laws of the

¹⁹José de Gálvez, Informe y plan de intendancias . . . de Nueva España. BL.

²⁰Juan Joseph Martín Soria to the king. Oct. 9, 1777, num. 2, AGI, 146-6-14. Indiferente General. BL.

Recopilación which had been annulled were omitted, others were amplified and modified because of later royal resolutions, some new ones which the innovations of the times demanded were added, and all were made as near like the laws of the Spanish metropolis as possible.²¹ The king expected the work to be a reform that would last for all time, and indeed, though it proved to have defects, it was a remarkable piece of legislation.

The primary purpose of the new system of intendancies was to relieve the overworked viceroy; the intendants were to be real assistants to him, and thus supply a need which had always been felt in the colonies. For this reason those officials were to be carefully chosen from among Spanish-born subjects, since they were considered more efficient than creoles or *mestizos*. The far-reaching aim of the entire reform was to make the revenues more ample through more efficient collections, for it was desperately necessary to secure greater wealth and strength wherewith to check England in the great rivalry for colonial possessions.

Twelve intendancies and three provinces were established in Mexico in 1786. The intendants who headed the divisions took full charge of finances and were immediately responsible to the intendant-general of the capital; they were appointed by the king and performed the duties of the former governors in civil administration, cases of justice, and military matters.²² A complete change also took place in the local government; the old *corregimientos* (districts administered by *corregidores*) and *alcaldías mayores* were suppressed and united to the intendancies. Subdelegates replaced the *corregidores* and *alcaldes mayores*, who had long been the cause of abuses in misappropriation of royal revenues. The new subordinate officials were put in charge

²¹Dictamen que en cumplimiento de reales ordenes de S. M. produce el virrey de Nueva España conde de Revilla Gigedo, sobre la precision de adicionar la ordenanza de intendentes, expedida en 4 de Diciembre de 1786. Mexico, July 2, 1790 to May 5, 1791, art. 14, AGI, 1300 (88-7-23). Audiencia de Méjico.

²²*Real ordenanza para el establecimiento é instrucción de intendentes de ejército y provincia en el reino de Nueva España* (Madrid, 1786), arts. 1-4.

of *partidos*, as the divisions of the intendancies were then called, and they served without salaries. They were directly subject to the intendant of province, who at first appointed them to serve for five years, but in 1787 the viceroy was granted this power.²³ The effectiveness of the new system depended largely upon those officials, since good local government is usually the basis for successful national administration. Without doubt the innovation simplified the functions of those in authority, facilitated the execution of the laws and the designs of administration, concentrated the force of the government, and restored the energy which it had suffered on account of distance.

Another change in administration which affected the colonies was the division of the ministry of the Indies on July 8, 1787, which was not uniformly popular. José Pablo Valiente asserted that, with the four pen strokes which did this, the nation lost all the fruit of the advantageous Bourbon provisions which purified the system of government in America and promised great things. He declared that it was the measures of a united ministry controlled by the great José de Gálvez, in the thirteen years preceding 1787, aided by the opinions of the Council of the Indies, the natural progress of the laws, and good economic ideas, which provided the great reforms after it had banished errors. That ministry, by issuing the Grand Pragmatic of Free Commerce in 1778, brought about freedom of commerce between the ports of America and Spain, which multiplied the mercantile expeditions and the profits of both worlds. All the strength of a united ministry was necessary to put the famous *reglamento* of free commerce into effect because the mistake of keeping all the commerce of the metropolis with its colonies confined to one port had powerful supporters. The Gálvez ministry freed internal commerce of the Mexican provinces from the infamous monopolists who, in order to oppress the miserable Indians,

²³*Ibid.*, arts. 7, 9, 12. For information relative to the many functions of intendants see Lillian Estelle Fisher, *The Intendant System in Spanish America* (Berkeley, 1929).

carried in the right hand a measuring rod and in the left that of justice. The corregidores and alcaldes mayores were those monopolists before the intendant system was established; but they were overthrown and merchants went into the regions of the royal mines and other populous places where they never dared to penetrate in former times on account of fear of offending those despots and of persecution. The united ministry under Gálvez regulated the financial system in accordance with true principles of political economy. The promotion of production and natural wealth, the reduction of the price of quicksilver, the advancement of mining by means of ordinances, the establishment of the college of metallurgy of Mexico, the multiplication of houses of exchange, the incorporation in the crown of all the offices of the mints which caused coinage to greatly increase, the sowing of flax and hemp in New Spain—those were some of the projects which received life under the hand of a sole minister, the celebrated José de Gálvez, who should have due credit for his patriotism and constant zeal for the public welfare. So many useful undertakings at one time proved the ease of achievement, the energy, and strength of the government.

At the death of that galvanic man his ministry suffered its first division and afterwards it was divided among the other secretaries of state. Valiente maintained that everything was in confusion due to this; the Council of the Indies could not be counted on since it was anti-political by its nature and whatever means it might have employed would have produced similar disorder. In vain methods were tried so that the work of the former ministry might be performed. Chief officials, subalterns, and finally three directorships, with powers almost ministerial, were provided, but all those innovations were soon abandoned. More than ten million inhabitants in both Americas, far distant from the throne, were intrusted to the cares of some secretaries of state who were chiefly occupied with the affairs of former ministers. The Americans suffered the humiliation of seeing themselves treated with less special consideration than they

enjoyed before. Valiente said that Spain copied France and England in minor things like dress and eating, when it should have been interested to imitate their example and that of Portugal in uniting their colonies under one minister only.

Nature resisted the plan to make the government uniform in all parts of the monarchy; the laws and administration of the Spanish metropolis could not be fit to rule countries so extensive and distant from the center of control, in which neither climate, natural productions, the life of the inhabitants, nor the castes were the same. Those essential differences were understood and considered in the laws of the Indies, and from the reign of Emperor Charles V the government of America was separated from that of Spain by the establishment of a special council for it—the noted Council of the Indies. “Nevertheless the idea prevailed,” said Valiente, “of confusing the government of the Indies with that of the peninsula.” The motto was “One king, one law,” but it was not realized that there was a contradiction when the ministry, which was the center of that union of power, was divided. The result was that the viceroys as captains-general corresponded with the minister of war, as governors and presidents of the audiencias, with the attorney-general, as superintendents of the treasury, with the minister of the treasury, as superintendent sub-delegates of the Post Offices, with the minister of state, and finally with the minister of marine in matters of that branch. The same thing happened with the audiencias and intendants. Valiente stated that the natural effect of the new system was confusion which began with the secretaries of state themselves and ended with the last employee of America. The division and subdivision were made without sufficient knowledge. The disorder of the various branches of which each minister took charge left an open margin for viceroys, governors, and each employee, according to the degree of protection or favor which they obtained in the different offices. From this innumerable contentions arose and the name of the sovereign was employed at the same

time in approving and disapproving the same measure by different ministers. After 1787 viceroys received numerous contradictory orders in their administration, as had their immediate predecessors, because of the many ministers. Valiente declared that with such measures it was a miracle that America did not pass into a state of anarchy or complete dissolution; the divided ministry spent more of its time in avoiding and diminishing contentions and contradictions, and in repairing evils than in the administration of justice and the decision of important matters of government, yet it was unable to supply the lack of the united system.²⁴

The colonial reforms of the greatest Bourbon monarch had many good results, but the pity is that they did not come sooner in order to remove so many iniquitous abuses; then they might have served the purpose of making a real union of Spain and Spanish America in an effective imperial organization worthy of the ideas of the great Charles III. Humboldt declared that the intendancies began a memorable epoch for the welfare of the Indians, who were freed from many of the petty vexations to which they were subject, due to the active vigilance of the intendants. For the first time after centuries of oppression the natives began to enjoy the benefits granted to them by the laws.²⁵ The abuses practiced by the corregidores and *alcaldes mayores* under the *repartimientos* were eliminated. The Indians were free to trade wherever and with whomever it suited them, in order to provide themselves with everything that they needed. The intendants furnished the people a more immediate and prompt recourse in their judicial cases; they no longer had to incur the expense of long journeys or neglect their interests and occupations by going to the capital.²⁶ The simplicity of the system was in its favor, as it required a smaller number of officials than the earlier administra-

²⁴José Pablo Valiente, *Sobre sistema de gobierno de America*. Sevilla, Sept. 16, 1809, AGI, 141-5-11. Audiencia de Méjico.

²⁵*Ensayo político sobre Nueva España*, I, 200.

²⁶Revillagigedo, *Instrucción reservada*, art. 830.

tion. The principal purpose of the intendancies was to increase the royal revenues and this end was attained; in 1794 the revenue from tribute amounted to 19,000,000 pesos, or three times as much as when it was first reformed under Gálvez. Administrative expenses had been correspondingly augmented to 4,800,000 pesos, but even then there remained a surplus revenue of 14,200,000 pesos.²⁷

The trouble was that many of the reforms were only temporary and there was so much opposition to the intendant system from the very beginning that it was difficult to administer. Like all innovations the new gubernatorial system created many points of friction and some old timers thought the country would be ruined by it. The fact that it interfered with the viceroy's powers was against it, although it was intended to aid that busy official in the performance of his functions. The viceroys had exercised supreme power for so long that they were unwilling to have it decreased, even if their administrative burdens should be thereby lightened. One of the serious points of contention was the transfer to the intendants of some of the functions of the ecclesiastical patronage, which had pertained only to the viceroys. Complaints came from all sides, since the intendant system met with disfavor and its modification was desired. Doubts arose relative to many points of the new laws, for instance, the question of ceremony, which had distressed so many officials before the time of the intendants. Another uncertain matter was the relationship which the governors of frontier provinces were to have with the intendants. The matter had to be determined by the noted Revillagigedo, who declared in 1790 that the governor of Texas was subject to the intendant of San Luis Potosí in financial and military affairs.²⁸ Two years later he stated that the governors of Nuevo León, Nuevo Santander, Coahuila, and Texas were subdelegates of the intendants in

²⁷*Ibid.*, arts. 741-743.

²⁸Revillagigedo to the governor of Texas. Feb. 10, 1790. *Provincias Internas*, tom. 99, num. 6, expediente 2, foja 344. Archivo General de Mexico. BL.

finance and war according to the Ordinance of Intendants, but the governor of Texas did not comply readily with the decision and tried to interfere with the jurisdiction of the intendant of San Luis Potosí.²⁹

Villarreal expressed his dislike for the new administrative system very strongly. He demonstrated that the viceroys had not been sensibly relieved of their official burdens, since some of them still spent from four to six hours daily in the dispatch of contentious expedientes which the two secretaries of the government submitted to them for proper reference; thus much valuable time was lost which might have been used for more important matters.³⁰ The same observant critic believed that a fixed system of government was necessary, with no variation in the decrees issued, since that caused confusion and arbitrary interpretations. He admitted that the royal purposes in legislation had always been good, but the desired results were not attained because of the negligence and selfishness of officials. He regarded the new system as unconstitutional and arbitrary because it rendered invalid old laws which were wise and of great usefulness. The colonial government was made uniform with that of Spain, whereas in actuality very different rules should apply to America since conditions were not the same as in the mother country.³¹ The Indians were not much better off than before for they were deprived of the guidance and restraint which they had profited by under the old régime. They were indeed given more responsibility but did not know how to use it and frequently fell into indolence; therefore Villarreal thought the natives had received more benefit under the old repartimientos by the *alcaldes*.³²

Viceroy Revillagigedo was more optimistic about the new administrative system which had been approved by many wise men in order to remedy disorders in the colonies. Al-

²⁹Revillagigedo to the king. Nov. 5, 1792, AGI, 103-7-22, *papeleta* 206. Audiencia de Guadalajara. BL.

³⁰Enfermedades políticas. . . MS, I, pt. II, pp. 2-3. BL.

³¹*Ibid.*, MS, IV, pt. VI, pp. 7-10, 56-70.

³²*Ibid.*, MS, IV, pt. VI, 36 et seq., 85.

though no human plans were perfect at the beginning, he believed that the intendant system would triumph in the end but like all new undertakings it required time. The contradictions which arose should be looked upon as mistakes that were only temporary and could be remedied.⁸³ The great man thought that the innovation should not be abandoned, in spite of its imperfections, because it would be very difficult to restore the old régime. Nevertheless he wished certain changes to be made, since many of the essential articles were not effective and individuals who were not interested in them broke them with ease. The measures were confused with the old imperfect system of government, thus the new system was badly understood and observed.⁸⁴ But the antagonists of the establishment did not have reason to consider it impossible to enforce and injurious to the country. The same denunciations were uttered many years before when the mint and the alcabalas were instituted, when the troops were regulated by Juan de Villalva for the defense of the kingdom, and when Visitor Gálvez came to put into better order the royal revenues and the tribunals of justice, yet they all brought great benefits to Mexico.⁸⁵

The shrewd administrator proposed some additions and changes for the Ordinance of Intendants in order to make it more effective. First he recommended that the power of the viceroy should not be impaired in any manner and the twelve intendants should be directly subordinate to him in everything. This submission of the intendants to the viceroy he would have made political rather than economic, for in the latter field they were wisely under the junta superior.⁸⁶ He thought too that the ecclesiastical vice-patronage, or control over the Mexican church, should reside only in the viceroy who was the supreme representative of the king in

⁸³Revillagigedo to Floridablanca. Jan. 15, 1790, num. 55, AGI, leg. 1. Papeles de Estado (Audiencia de Mexico) BL; *ibid.*, Oct. 30, 1790, num. 97 reservada. Archivo General; *ibid.*, June 1, 1791, num. 35, AGI, 1-6-9. Papeles de Estado (Audiencia de Mexico). BL.

⁸⁴Dictamen . . . sobre la ordenanza de intendentes . . . arts. 10-13, AGI, 1300 (88-7-23). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁸⁵*Ibid.*, arts. 17-21.

⁸⁶*Ibid.*, arts. 27-29, 117.

America. All the intendants, except of Yucatan because of the distance, should be subdelegates of the viceroy in matters of the patronage and give account to him relative to the churches in their districts; they ought not to have any more distinctions in religious matters than the former governors.³⁷ He wanted the intendants to be men of learning, talent, efficiency, and disinterestedness so that they might be real assistants of the busy executive. Furthermore they should be familiar with the country and the inclinations of the inhabitants, also must have good health and the proper age to bear the burdens of their office and to inspect their provinces frequently.³⁸ They could safely perform many of the minor functions of the viceroys and he desired them to have capable assessors (legal advisers) who had legal training, efficiency, experience, and a knowledge of the province if possible.³⁹

Military men could serve as intendants best, according to Revillagigedo, for they would then be of real utility in case of disturbances and could assist, or even replace, the sub-inspector general of the troops. The six intendancies of Vera Cruz, Yucatan, Puebla, Mexico, Guadalajara, and Sonora should be governed by high military chiefs, but lesser military authorities or political officials would be sufficient in the other intendancies. There should be three classes of intendancies in order that they might be a means of promotion for the intendants and an incentive for greater efficiency.⁴⁰ He proposed four new intendancies, one for the four Provincias Internas of the east, another for Chihuahua, another for Querétaro, and another for Tabasco;⁴¹ and he suggested many changes in the boundaries of the twelve intendancies, reducing some, like that of Mexico which was very populous, and enlarging others.⁴² A division

³⁷Dictamen . . . sobre la ordenanza de intendentes . . . arts. 125-128.

³⁸Revillagigedo al Exmo. Fr. Don Antonio Valdés. Mexico, July 3, 1790, AGI, 1300 (88-7-23). Audiencia de Méjico.

³⁹Revillagigedo, Dictamen . . . sobre la ordenanza de intendentes . . . arts. 215-216, AGI, 1300 (88-7-23). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, arts. 65, 79-88, 102.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, arts. 41, 50, 53.

⁴²*Ibid.*, art. 37 et seq.

of the junta superior he believed advisable, one part to take charge of contentious matters only and the other of economic and administrative affairs.⁴³

The prohibition of the repartimientos (the provisioning of the Indians with tools, animals, seeds, etc.) by the Ordinance of Intendants caused many doubts and differences of opinion. Viceroy Branciforte found it very difficult to enforce the article which treated the matter, and he thought that the subdelegates needed the repartimientos in order to be able to subsist in their positions.⁴⁴ Complaints were made that without the repartimientos the Indians lapsed into idleness, the fields remained without cultivation, the mines were deserted, the people did not receive Christian instruction, and the revenues decayed.⁴⁵ The intendants themselves had many contradictory opinions concerning that institution. Juan Antonio Riaño, intendant of Valladolid, wanted the Ordinance to be observed strictly in regard to the repartimientos, because it had checked in his province unjust monopoly and had increased the number of traders and merchants; the monopolized articles circulated freely at more regular prices. The intendant of Puebla, Manuel de Flon, was of the same opinion. He said that there was no reason to complain of such a just provision and he desired that commerce should be absolutely forbidden to any justice, priest, administrator of revenue, dependent of La Acordada, or to any person who exercised jurisdiction. He believed that contracts with the Indians and other people should be voluntary and goods should be sold in the most public places. Traders should submit an exact list of the sales and debtors—one to the subdelegate and another to the intendant. The subdelegate could decide cases of lack of payment and how the debt was to be paid. The intendants of Mexico, Durango, and Oaxaca were also opposed to the repartimientos. The latter intendant said

⁴³*Ibid.*, art. 110 et seq.

⁴⁴Branciforte to Varela. March 30, 1795, MS, num. 982 reservada. Archivo General de Mexico. BL.

⁴⁵Revillagigedo, Dictamen . . . sobre la ordenanza de intendentes . . . art. 136.

that since they had ceased all the vassals in his province carried on commerce freely and sold their products at the current prices; as a result the people were greatly benefitted as shown by the money made by the merchants of the capital, Puebla, and Vera Cruz in 1789 and from the amount in the treasuries of those cities. He declared that the Indians of Oaxaca were not so lazy as some people thought and it was not necessary to whip them to make them work; they were industrious, inclined to carry on commerce, and sufficiently rational. The intendant of San Luis Potosí disapproved of the usury which was demanded under the repartimientos, by which many *alcaldes mayores* became wealthy. On the other hand the intendants of Zacatecas, Vera Cruz, Yucatan, Guanajuato, and Guadalajara favored the repartimientos. Lucas de Gálvez, the intendant of Yucatan, affirmed that, since the repartimientos had been prohibited, the appearance of the province was changed by its extreme poverty and unfortunate conditions, therefore the only thing to do was to return to the old institution for which everybody clamored. The intendant of Sonora, Pedro Garrido y Duran, believed that repartimientos might be permitted without harm in special cases.⁴⁶ Revillagigedo realized that just rules for the repartimientos were never worked out by his predecessors or by special *juntas*, and that conditions never could be improved unless the intendants used great tact and activity to check abuses.⁴⁷ He thought that the article prohibiting the repartimientos was one of the most important parts of the Ordinance of Intendants and that nothing would be more serious than to break it; nevertheless many people still hoped that the old institution would be restored.⁴⁸ Evidently the new plan was not equally well adapted to widely varying conditions.

The intendants did not turn out to be the outstanding personages that had been expected under the new régime

⁴⁶Revillagigedo, *Dictamen . . . sobre la ordenanza de intendentes . . .* art. 144 et seq.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, art. 192.

⁴⁸Revillagigedo, Nov. 26, 1790, num. 162 reservada. Archivo General. BL.

and they certainly never became as powerful as their counterparts the French intendants. Although some of them did try to inform themselves thoroughly concerning means of improvement for the people and their provinces, most of them were unfamiliar with the country over which they ruled because of its extensive territory and inaccessible nature, and on the whole they were men of limited capacities, not much of an improvement over the former officials; while under the old administrative system there had been a number of highly capable governors, some of whom were promoted to the honorable office of viceroy.⁴⁹ Felipe Cleree, intendant of Zacatecas, was old, Felipe Díaz de Ortega of Durango had poor health and was too great a lover of his own ideas and projects which he did not put into effect, it was reported that Bruno Díaz de Salcedo of San Luis Potosí had interests of his own and a severe disposition, and Andrés Amat de Tortosa was retired from the intendancy of Guanajuato on account of either true or feigned madness.⁵⁰

Great was the aversion of the ayuntamiento of Puebla to Manuel de Flon, the intendant, who was mentioned by Viceroy Revillagigedo as one of the best intendants. The city organization declared that dissatisfaction with him was general because he did not attend public functions and the meetings of the town council, but he required that everything treated in it should be submitted to his approval although this was not necessary except in elections. It complained of his indolence and negligence in the fulfilment of his obligations and that he had not inspected his province for six years. The councilmen had a particular grudge against Vicente de la Vega, the royal notary, whom he kept as his agent, therefore they asked for the dismissal of Vega. The audiencia did suspend him since it desired to check the

⁴⁹Revillagigedo, *Instrucción reservada*, arts. 834-836.

⁵⁰Revillagigedo al Exmo. Señor Fr. Don Antonio Valdés. Mexico, July 3, 1790, AGI, 1300 (88-7-23). Audiencia de Méjico.

dissension between the ayuntamiento and the intendant.⁵¹ Flon did not permit the ayuntamiento to examine the accounts of municipal funds and the revenues of the city which were submitted by the administrator, as the Ordinance of Intendants provided, but kept them under his own control. He acted haughtily, tried to increase his power, and denied the council its prerogatives.⁵² Tomás Mariano de Bustamante, a lawyer of the college of Mexico City, said that Antonio de Mora y Peysal, intendant of Oaxaca, had not improved the province in the fifteen years of his command; he did not examine the offices of the ministers of the royal treasury as had been expected. The father of Bustamante had charge of the revenues from the lottery and the intendant never entered his office to see how he was getting along. Yet every day cases of carelessness in the management of the revenues arose and there was a deficit of 4000 pesos on the part of the administrator of the district of Sanchila. The intendant was accused of laziness, delaying cases, and imprisoning Bustamante in the public prison of Oaxaca.⁵³

The subdelegates did not prove to be as successful as was expected and were not a great improvement over the *alcaldes mayores*. The new officials tried to abolish the abuses of the *alcaldes*, but, since they did not receive any regular remuneration, the remedy was more dangerous than the former condition. The five per cent allotted to them for collecting the tribute could scarcely pay their expenses because in some cases it only amounted to about three hundred pesos. If they were to depend upon such a sum for their subsistence they would have perished from hunger; there-

⁵¹Audiencia de Mexico da cuenta con testimonio del expediente formado sobre capitulos puestos por el ayuntamiento de la ciudad de Puebla contra el intendente governador . . . Mexico, June 26, 1793, num. 690, AGI, 1780 (91-6-15). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁵²Los capitulares que componen el Ylle. ayuntamiento y junta municipal de propios, de la ciudad de Puebla de los Angeles. Suppca. a V. M. Madrid, Nov. 13, 1793, AGI, 1780 (91-6-15). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁵³El licenciado Don Tomás Mariano de Bustamante al ministro universal. Tlaxcala, March 30, 1802, AGI, 1791 (91-7-1). Audiencia de Méjico.

fore by necessity they had to prostitute their offices, defraud the poor, and carry on commerce. A royal decree of March 27, 1787, ordered that subdelegates should be granted some aid in expenses, but Viceroy Flórez suspended the measure and it was never put into effect. Consequently it was very difficult for the inhabitants to find suitable persons for subdelegates; they were forced to take individuals who were failures in life or lacked talents to get along well in other careers.⁸⁴

It was reported in Oaxaca that the subdelegates oppressed the Indians through the repartimientos although they were prohibited. They made the Indians receive goods against their will, they collected money by force, they formed a monopoly of certain articles to the injury of commerce and the public, and they committed the greatest scandals causing dissensions and rivalries among the people in order to increase their own wealth. The result was that the Indians were obliged to commit robberies on account of such tyranny, for they suffered even greater vexations than under the *alcaldes mayores*. There were many unscrupulous candidates for the position of subdelegate in spite of the small legal remuneration.⁸⁵ Complaint was made of the abuse with which subdelegates appointed lieutenants and permitted them to perform the functions of the four departments of government, violating what was provided in article twelve of the Ordinance of Intendants. This article stated that the subdelegate himself was to take charge of the four departments. The consequence was that, without giving account of their appointment to the viceroy or the *audiencia*, the subdelegates chose as assistants inefficient persons like

⁸⁴Queipo, "Representación sobre la inmunidad personal del clero." Valladolid, Dec. 11, 1799. In Mora, *Obras sueltas*, I, 57; Revillagigedo, *Instrucción reservada*, arts. 850-853, 855.

⁸⁵Don Josef Vicente Maria de Paz y Mendoza, Expediente sobre las quejas dadas por el cura de la parroquial del valle de Oaxaca acerca de los injustos repartimientos que hacen á los Indios los subdelegados de aquella provincia . . . Oaxaca, Sept. 19, 1797, AGI, 1890 (92-4-14). Audiencia de Méjico.

servants, their relatives, and perhaps mulattoes who vexed the people.⁶⁶

The subdelegates were enjoined by the Ordinance to provide for the needs of the people, visit them and furnish means for their subsistence so that the population would grow, render justice, and promote new methods of agriculture; but none of those benefits were experienced in the province of Oaxaca after the intendancies were established. The districts were not visited and the people did not know justice; they lived in freedom without any subordination, insulting their superiors and priests, who were not able to check them. Every day the towns decayed more, it was impossible to pay tribute and other royal dues, and the people were without spiritual food. The circulation of commerce among Spaniards ceased and the treasury was burdened because of the increased salaries of the new officials. The subdelegates did not have any particular interest in their jurisdictions and the intendants did not inspect their provinces—those were the real causes why agriculture was not promoted. The king ordered the raising of silk and the cultivation of mulberry trees, however there was nobody to teach the Indians the utility that would result from such an industry. Villanasa Rivera thought that it was necessary to keep the intendancies, but the inferior justices should be given the aid necessary for the betterment of the natives and those who put their own interests first should be severely punished.⁶⁷

The subdelegates were accused of being the blind tools of the intendants, of the commandant-general, or of the judges of the audiencia, from whom they hoped to receive

⁶⁶La audiencia de Mexico, informe con testimonio de los abusos contra el artículo 12 de la ordenanza de intendentes . . . Mexico, Nov. 29, 1791, AGI, 1750 (91-5-13). Audiencia de México; Real ordenanza . . . de intendentes . . . de la Nueva España, art. 12.

⁶⁷Dn. Francisco Antonio Villanasa Rivera al consejo. El ministro tesorero de aquellas cazas. Oaxaca, April 22, 1793, AGI, 1782 (91-6-17). Audiencia de Méjico; Expediente subscitado por el tesorero de caja de Oaxaca Dn. Francisco Antonio Villanasa Rivera, acerca de la decadencia de aquella provincia. . . June 4, 1796, num. 6, AGI, 1780 (91-6-15). Audiencia de Méjico.

favours. They had no will of their own but only reflected that of their superiors. They were servile before the rich and powerful, who alone could bring their interests before the higher authorities; they were oppressors of the poor and weak; and they devoted their time to their own private business and interests. Many encouraged idleness in others by their own indolence and vice,⁵⁸ and did not have the least idea of civil and domestic policy. Without doubt the subdelegates suffered greatly on account of financial difficulties, and were often forced to do the will of their guarantors, who were usually inhabitants of the districts; thus they were deprived of freedom to act as they wished. The wise Revillagigedo recognized that the small pay of those subordinate officials was one of the obstacles to the Ordinance of Intendants and he felt certain that they would work better as soon as they received higher remuneration. Since there were few more than one hundred and seventy *alcaldes mayores* in Mexico when the intendancies were established, he believed that the subdelegates who replaced them could safely be paid proper salaries. They were to be divided into three classes; the pay was to be one thousand pesos for those of first class, six hundred for second, and four hundred for third class.⁵⁹ Revillagigedo desired that the subdelegates should be of such good character that they would not need to give bond, to undergo the *residencia*, or to pay the half annate.⁶⁰

The non-observance of the laws was as great a problem after the intendancies were inaugurated as under the old régime. The tendency seemed to be to make laws, modify them by means of royal decrees, annul them, or merely forget them; it is still perfectly permissible in Spain and in

⁵⁸J. A. Escudero, *Noticias estadísticas del estado de Chihuahua* (Mexico, 1834), 21-23.

⁵⁹Dictamen . . . sobre la ordenanza de intendentes . . . arts. 197, 201, 204.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, arts. 152-154. The fact was that as late as 1804 subdelegates still made use of the repartimientos to oppress the Indians in violation of the Ordinance of Intendants. Josef de Iturrigaray al Exmo. Sor. D. Pedro Ceballos. Mexico, Dec. 27, 1804, num. 82, AGI, 2380 (95-4-7). Audiencia de Méjico.

other countries to ignore small laws. One of the first changes made in the Ordinance of Intendants was on November 22, 1787, when a royal order returned to the viceroy the power to confirm elections of *alcaldes ordinarios* in accordance with the laws of the *Recopilación*, abolishing part of article eleven of the new code. Another royal provision of March 28 and October 25 of the same year extended the power of the viceroy relative to the appointment of subdelegates; finally a decree of October 7, 1788, declared that those officials were not to be chosen without his approval.⁶¹ In the same year control of the income from rents of lands held in perpetuity by the towns (*censos*), municipal finances, and the management of the proceeds from Indian communities were again conferred upon the executive, thereby annulling articles six and twenty-eight of the Ordinance. Many doubts and difficulties arose because the *audiencia* believed that it had absolute power to regulate the funds of those branches. From this resulted the confusion, slowness, and mistakes with which they were administered, since the business done in the *audiencia* was also treated by the *junta superior* and the viceroy. It is certain that the *audiencia* never had those powers and that they were taken away from the *junta superior* and given to the viceroy by the royal order of September 14, 1788.⁶² Another change was the restoration of the superintendancy of the treasury to the viceroy in 1789, after the duties of that office had been under the charge of the intendant-general of army for three years.⁶³ The restoration of the financial administration to the viceroy therefore placed on his shoulders again much of the drudgery which the Ordinance had shifted. In regard to drawing upon the treasury for funds, the same rules held for the viceroy as for the intendant, but in 1790 the king was willing to waive them in cases of urgency and to allow the viceroy to use such funds as he

⁶¹Revillagigedo, Dictamen . . . sobre la ordenanza de intendentes . . . art. 132.

⁶²*Ibid.*, arts. 230-233, 235.

⁶³*Ibid.*, art. 6.

thought best.⁶⁴ By a royal decree of December 2, 1794, it was declared that the supervision of all public works, such as roads and bridges, pertained to the viceroy, just as before the intendancies were established.⁶⁵

Parts of the Ordinance of Intendants were not enforced, as for instance, the visitation of provinces by the intendants; true it was that some intendants could not make tours of inspection because their salaries and those of the subdelegates were not sufficient to meet the required expenses, also it was inconvenient for them to leave their posts for so long.⁶⁶ Articles fifty-seven and fifty-eight of the new code, which provided for making maps of the country, were not fulfilled, since all the engineers were needed in the capital, Vera Cruz, and the Provincias Internas. Articles sixty-four, sixty-five, and sixty-six concerning the construction of roads and bridges were not put into effect on account of lack of funds.⁶⁷ The tribute was not entered into the treasury by thirds as article one hundred and twenty-nine required, and what the *junta de diezmos* (committee on tithes) ordered by article one hundred and sixty-nine was not effected because that provision was suspended by a royal order of March 23, 1788.⁶⁸ The intendants of Mexico neglected to draw up regulations for the administration of municipal funds and submit them to the junta superior for approval, and malversation of public resources was still common.⁶⁹ In 1792 article one hundred and thirty-three of the Ordinance, relative to masters of domestic servants paying tribute for them, was suspended. It was difficult to enforce the regulations concerning the tribute, since the quota was greater than before and many people were reduced to the vagabond class.⁷⁰

⁶⁴King to the viceroy. Feb. 27, 1793, Est. Mex. leg. 2. Archivo General. BL.

⁶⁵Jerónimo Becker, *La política española en las Indias* (Madrid, 1920), 65.

⁶⁶Revillagigedo, Dictamen . . . sobre la ordenanza de intendentes . . . arts. 248-249.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, arts. 254, 267.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, arts. 387, 495.

⁶⁹Revillagigedo, *Instrucción reservada*, arts. 154-157.

⁷⁰Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Sept. 3, 1804, AGI, 1799 (91-7-9). Audiencia de Méjico.

Manuel de Flon, intendant of Puebla, complained in 1793 that the wise laws of the code of Intendants, which were intended to produce order, equality, and justice, were not obeyed. The tribunals did not respect the laws and granted immunity from them, consequently the intendant was frequently obliged to use force to fulfil the royal measures. Flon said that it was his duty to put the laws into effect, but his hands were tied because the measures were contested, resisted, and contradicted, and after five years he could not obtain the free use of them. He declared that the intendants could do little when they were surrounded by inimical tribunals which they had to recognize as superiors without any shield or defense except the laws of the Ordinance which offended them. He advised that the intendants should be suppressed if they were to be inactive and the obstacles against them continued, hence the salaries of magistrates, who did not serve for anything, might be saved; if the king were to draw from the intendancies all the advantages proposed in their erection, it was indispensable that the laws and royal ordinances be obeyed.⁷¹ The next year Flon asked for an interpretation of articles twenty-two to twenty-seven of the Ordinance of Intendants because the judges of his province caused many contradictions and were insubordinate to the superior authority. Some of the subdelegates also refused to fulfil his measures, for instance the subdelegates of Tepeaca and Atlixco made it difficult to discharge his duties as intendant.⁷²

Occasionally new conditions arose for which the Ordinance of Intendants did not provide. Revillagigedo said that the disorders in the city of Querétaro were such that it was necessary to suspend articles eleven and seventy-seven of the recent code in order to obtain tranquility. The population of the city had grown so much that disturbances, excesses, and robberies increased; it was very difficult to

⁷¹Manuel de Flon al Exmo. Señor Don Pedro de Acuña. Puebla, Feb. 1, 1793, num. 2, AGI, 1885 (92-4-9). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁷²Manuel de Flon al Señor Don Antonio Ventura de Taranco. Puebla, March 20, 1794, AGI, 1751 (91-5-14). Audiencia de Méjico.

enforce what the laws decreed in regard to the division of the powers of government. The articles above mentioned provided that matters of the treasury and war should remain with the subdelegate, but those of justice and *policía* (general administration) should belong to the cabildo and *alcaldes ordinarios*. The town of Querétaro needed a judge independent of the *alcaldes ordinarios* who could administer justice and efficiently regulate matters of *policía*; therefore it was proposed to suspend the articles mentioned, uniting the four departments of government in the subdelegate.⁷³ Finally the king decided to appoint a learned *corregidor* for Querétaro and the intendant was to subdelegate to him the branches of finance and war. The viceroy appointed Ignacio Ruiz Calado *ad interim* *corregidor* and with the aid of the *audiencia* was to determine the salary of the new official.⁷⁴ By a sovereign resolution it was necessary to inform the Council of the Indies that, although the intendancies were erected, there should still be maintained various *corregimientos* and even some *alcaldías mayores* on the old basis.⁷⁵ Another important part of the Ordinance of Intendants was thus not strictly observed.

In 1791 Viceroy Revillagigedo reported to the Council of the Indies that the junta superior declared that article two hundred and forty-one of the Ordinance could not be fulfilled. This law provided that individual schedules of goods transmitted to the capital should be given to the intendants in addition to the copies of invoices, but the latter were omitted. The intendants made no use of the schedules, the customhouse of Vera Cruz had more work because of making the duplicates, and there was increased defalcation of the royal dues; therefore it was decided that the *guías* and invoices should be issued in the customhouse and the duplicate schedules omitted as before the establish-

⁷³Consulta del consejo de Indias. Aug. 3, 1793, num. 21, AGI, 1793 (91-7-3). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁷⁴Consulta de la camara de las Indias. June 20, 1795, num. 8, *ibid.*

⁷⁵Camara de las Indias. April 20, 1796, num. 21, *ibid.*

ment of the intendancies.⁷⁶ The viceroy notified the Council of the Indies of the difficulties which article one hundred and sixty-two caused in handling salable and renunciabile offices. In the Spanish colonies one of the sources of revenue came from the sale or renunciation of non-judicial government offices bought by the inhabitants for one or more lives. It seemed that the expedientes relative to those offices had to pass twice to the capital—first to declare their value and second to obtain approval of it. Such procedure produced delay and there was danger that the documents might go astray on account of the great distance of some provinces from the capital; most of the salable positions were those of notaries and regidores of the towns and cities, therefore good administration was injured by delay.⁷⁷ The same executive also wanted to know the exact meaning of article twelve of the Ordinance relative to fees on the titles of subdelegates. The article mentioned stated that the subdelegate should receive a title without fees, but there had been doubt about the matter as early as 1789 on the part of the intendant regent of Guadalajara and likewise in the capital. Fernando Joseph Mangino, the superintendant subdelegate of the treasury, commanded that the fees should be collected according to the rates of the half annate or salary tax of government officials; later the notary of the treasury, Agustín Martínez de Vargas, regulated the fees to suit himself, thus abrogating the power which belonged to superior officials to determine rates. Vargas fixed the amount on all titles of subdelegates at twenty-five pesos and added another ten for expenses of writing, certi-

⁷⁶Revillagigedo al Señor Conde de Lerena. Mexico, Nov. 27, 1791, num. 636, AGI, 1300 (88-7-23). Audiencia de Méjico; Expediente relativo á lo acordado por la junta superior de real hacienda de Mexico, sobre que en la aduana de Vera Cruz se expidan las guías, segun se practicaba antes del establecimiento de las intendencias; omitiendo las duplicadas notas que prescribe el artículo 241 de la ordenanza de ellas. Consejo, Feb. 4, 1796, num. 26, *ibid.*

⁷⁷El virrey de Mexico informe sobre las dificultades que ofrece la observancia del artículo 162 de la ordenanza de yntendentes en razon de los oficios vendibles y renunciabiles . . . Madrid, March 16, 1795, AGI, 136-5-9. Indiferente General de Nueva España.

fication, stamped paper, and the payment of the notaries. This alarmed the civil fiscal and an investigation was made which showed the greatest variation in the fees on titles of subdelegates throughout the provinces. The indefatigable Revillagigedo explained the injuries caused by exaction of those fees because of the great variation; he thought that a general invariable rule should be established which notaries should follow.⁷⁸

In 1797 the ayuntamiento of Guanajuato complained about article eleven of the Ordinance of Intendants which provided for the election of only one *alcalde ordinario* annually. Each *alcalde* served two years and the senior official was to instruct the inexperienced man just beginning his duties. It was thought that this caused injuries in the administration of justice in such a populous city where there were so many vices, since the work was too heavy for the former official; therefore the councilmen asked to be permitted to disregard the Ordinance and elect two *alcaldes* every two years as formerly.⁷⁹ Viceroy Iturrigaray asked the king to annul law 40, title 16, book 2 of the *Recopilación*, relative to the salary of twelve pesos a day for ministers wearing togas or superior judges, who went out on commission; this law was still in effect in 1806 and he regarded it as out-of-date. He desired their salary to be increased because the cost of living had gone up considerably since the law was made.⁸⁰ The Council of the Indies did not agree with the Mexican executive and did not think that the law should be annulled as to do so would impose heavier burdens upon the treasury.⁸¹

The non-observance of the laws continued and grew

⁷⁸Revillagigedo al Exmo. Señor Don Pedro de Lerena. Mexico, May 27, 1791, num. 412, AGI, 1300 (88-7-23). Audiencia de Méjico; Revillagigedo al Exmo. Señor Dn. Diego de Gardoqui. Mexico, Oct. 30, 1793, num. 695, *ibid.*; *Real ordenanza . . . de intendentes . . . de la Nueva España*, art. 12.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, art. 11; Testimonio del expediente promovido por el ayuntamiento de Guanajuato, sobre que se restablezca la practica antigua de elegir cada año dos *alcaldes ordinarios*. 1797, AGI, 1313 (89-1-11). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁸⁰Josef de Iturrigaray á José Antonio Caballero. Mexico, Jan. 27, 1806, num. 372, AGI, 1814 (91-7-24). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁸¹Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Aug. 29, 1807, *ibid.*

worse as time passed. Francisco López, a citizen of Aguayo, said that he noticed the lack of obedience to orders in the government from which various complaints arose on the part of governors, and conflicting measures were dictated without consulting the superior administration. He therefore determined that all the commands which came from the superior government were to have due effect and all those to the contrary should not be recognized.⁸² Abad Queipo maintained that only the first class in Mexican society had any interest in the observance of laws because they protected their lives, honor, estates, and wealth against the insults and envy of the miserable. He asked, "What respect can the other two classes, who have no possessions, honor, or any motive of envy, have for laws which only serve to measure the penalties of their crimes?" Naturally they could not have affection for ministers of the law who only exercised their authority to assign them to prison, to the presidios, or the gallows. He thought that fear of punishment was not sufficient to keep people in subordination to the laws and government, but that it was more fit to elevate them from their misery, repress their vices, and constrain them by good government so that they might be obedient and submissive to the laws.⁸³

The dissatisfaction with the new administrative system, because of defects, violations, unworkable parts, and annulments, became so great that in 1802 there was a serious attempt to remodel all the Ordinances of Intendants for the whole of Spanish America. The king appointed a council of ministers for the very necessary work of revision and they were ordered to make one general code for all the colonies, with such additions and variations as seemed necessary. They drew up an entirely new Ordinance, which was somewhat shorter than the one for New Spain and had many variations; it was intended to supercede all the earlier

⁸²López á los ayuntamientos. Aguayo, July 7, 1814. *Matamoras Archives*, XV, p. 167. BL.

⁸³"Representación sobre la inmunidad personal del clero." Valladolid, Dec. 11, 1799. *In Mora*, I, 58-59.

laws. The salaries of intendants were reduced and remunerations were definitely fixed for subdelegates, who were to be appointed directly by the king with the advice of the Council of the Indies; thereby an old cause of criticism was removed. The plan of the shrewd Revillagigedo to divide the junta superior was included in the new Ordinance. The intendants were still subject to the higher authority of the viceroys and audiencias, consequently the plan did not provide for any elements of self-government, probably the chief defect. The Ordinance of 1803 lacked the legislative force of that of 1786 and was never put into effect on account of certain defects in its military regulations.⁸⁴ Another great opportunity of reform, of alleviating dissatisfaction, and for the advancement of colonial society was therefore lost forever. The Ordinance of 1786 with all its imperfections and lack of self-government was retained and continued to be used until the eve of independence.

The judicial system needed reform, for it too had lost its early vigor and numerous were the complaints against it. Judges did not count on the goodness of the cause or the declaration of the laws, but on good pay.⁸⁵ Even the famous *La Acordada*, a court dealing with highway robbery, which had struck terror into the hearts of criminals, decayed and sometimes became an object of tyranny. This court was empowered to inflict the death penalty on all robbers save Indians, who were tried in the ordinary courts. Justice was administered summarily and criminals were often hung on the nearest trees, since there was no need to report the sentences of the tribunal to the audiencia. Narciso Josef Yoleynie, a citizen of Mexico City, said that the king carelessly granted to *La Acordada* cognizance of all kinds of crimes which had not belonged to the *Santa Hermandad*, thus depriving criminals of all communication and of ap-

⁸⁴José María Zamora y Coronado, *Biblioteca de legislación ultramarina* (Madrid, 1844-1846), III, 379 et seq. and 493 et seq.

⁸⁵Extracto de la representación que la junta de diputados y electores de la minería de Guanajuato hizo sobre la conducta del Sr. Iturrigaray. In Hernández y Dávalos, I, 638.

peals. The weekly inspection of the prisons of the tribunal was not practiced, a defender was not assigned to malefactors who were in danger of suffering capital punishment, delinquents were separated from their parents, but were permitted to receive the food which they sent, the poor suffered from hunger, many criminals fell sick and died without the services of a priest, they were tortured and whipped, and their heads were cut off and put up in public places. The tribunal exercised excessive authority and had disputes with the criminal chamber of the *audiencia*, also with the territorial judges and justices. Yoleynie asked the king to provide that the tribunal should only take cognizance of the cases which belonged to it and should allow appeals.⁸⁶

Efforts were made to reform La Acordada at different times, however they were only temporary. In 1769 a royal decree commanded that, in the presence of the judge, the notary should make report of the cases to the two assessors and *defensor* of the tribunal, and that the judge should sign the condemnations with the advice of the three lawyers. Nevertheless the junta of revision of those cases noticed that in the sentence of one of them the signature of one of the assessors was lacking, and in 1788 the assessors reported to the superior government the evils, excesses, and disorders caused by the despotism of the judge. On September 13, 1798, the viceroy therefore ordered that the two assessors should sign the cases, but the judge declared that because of his power he could dispatch cases with the signature of only one assessor. The viceroy then submitted the matter to a junta, which expressed surprise that the judge did not wish to obey the laws and the constitution of the tribunal. It decided that no matter what powers the judge had exercised inside and outside of the capital, the sovereign decision of 1765 should be fulfilled, and that he must be

⁸⁶Narciso Josef Yoleynie, en nombre de la plebe cordata de Nueva España, al Señor Marqués de la Sonora. Mexico, Aug. 27, 1786, AGI, 1877 (92-4-1). Audiencia de Méjico; Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, July 30, 1819, AGI, 1148 (88-1-11). Audiencia de Méjico.

guided by the opinion of the assessors. The assessors and defensor of the tribunal were told to observe strictly the decree of September 13, 1798, which had been suspended to the injury of the criminals, because the abusive practice of dividing the cognizance of cases among the three lawyers and the judge signing what any of them dispatched had caused many serious evils.⁸⁷

The injuries caused by a junta, created in 1790, of revision of cases decided by La Acordada were reported to the viceroy who then informed the Council of the Indies about the matter. There were thousands of prisoners in the prisons of the viceroyalty of Mexico and more than six hundred in those of the capital whose cases were in process and not decided, an unheard of thing for La Acordada, which in its pristine days summarily tried culprits. There were the same conditions in the administration of justice as before the celebrated tribunal was established; cases proceeded slowly, punishment was tardy and faulty, many fled from prison, thereby increasing the bandit bands in the country, and appeals of common crimes were admitted in the criminal chamber of the audiencia. It was impossible for two or three individuals, occupied with other things, to examine all the cases of La Acordada in fifteen days as was required, therefore there were pending in the junta of revision three hundred and seventy-five cases, which after as many as fourteen month's delay, were returned with temporary measures that caused new judicial processes and the retention of the criminals in prison. This gave them a chance to continue their crimes by means of escape which was not difficult. On the other hand, when their cases passed to the junta of revision, malefactors who deserved freedom suffered delay, hunger, misery, and injury to their families because they could not provide for them while in prison. Fewer criminals were assigned to the presidios and

⁸⁷Expediente del virey de Nueva España dando cuenta de haber dispuesto que por los dos asesores del juzgado de La Acordada se firmasen las sentencias de sus causas, y no por uno solo, como se había hecho en algunas. July 4, 1799, num. 2, AGI, 1314 (89-1-12). Audiencia de Méjico.

this caused harm to those establishments. There was greater expense on account of the maintenance of culprits in prison, the salaries of the members of the junta, and the paper needed for books, resolutions, and other things. It was believed that the junta of revision should be suppressed and a *relator* who was a lawyer be appointed to report matters to the assessor general and give account to the viceroy; thus all its old power would be restored to the tribunal and the shameful delay of cases be avoided. It was impossible to dispatch cases promptly without making some innovation, and the assessor thought that the only remedy, if the junta of revision were kept, was to increase the number of its members so that the work might be distributed equally; if two lawyers were appointed they could also deal with the delayed cases. By a proclamation of August 7, 1798, the viceroy appointed the two lawyers, Josef María Santelices and Antonio Garcés, with a salary of one thousand pesos, and they took over some of the work of the assessor, who only attended to the most serious cases.⁸⁸

This reform did not help matters very much, since the tribunal continued to be lenient and to delay cases. In 1809 the audiencia voted that the government and system of La Acordada should be reformed, but it disagreed in the manner and execution of it.⁸⁹ In 1810, of the 1593 criminals sentenced by the tribunal not one was condemned to death. Altogether the total number of cases handled was 1675, of which 1067 were left over from the preceding year, and at the end of 1810 there remained undecided 1002 cases, only 673 being ended.⁹⁰ Finally in 1814 the Cortes extinguished the noted La Acordada, but the next year it was debated whether the tribunal should be reestablished. The viceroy did not want it, but the corporations of the capital and

⁸⁸Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, Jan. 28, 1800, AGI, 1139 (88-1-2). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁸⁹Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, July 30, 1819, AGI, 1148 (88-1-11). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁹⁰Estado que demuestra las operaciones del real tribunal de la acordada con sus reos y causas, en el año de 1810 . . . AGI, 1821 (92-1-7). Audiencia de Méjico.

other persons thought it would be useful because the number of criminals had increased at the beginning of the century. The Council of the Indies did not think it advisable to reestablish the tribunal until military courts were no longer needed in Mexico, then the king might do as he liked. There were no funds available for La Acordada, which needed 18,660 pesos annually and it was not easy to impose such a burden upon the treasury.²¹

Not only were the lower courts subject to criticism; complaints were loud and numerous against the audiencias and the highest judges in the colony. On April 3, 1800, the Council of the Indies reported to the king the grievances of Francisco Lisa, governor of Tlaxcala, against the audiencia and sala del crimen of Mexico. The prescribed judges of commission had not been sent to the province of Tlaxcala, and the audiencia took away from Lisa cognizance of a judicial process relative to lands which the Indians of the town of Atlihuahuetza and other districts were prosecuting against Juan de Betolaza, putting it in charge of Ignacio de Mena, an enemy of the governor. The supreme tribunal also protected the turbulent and seditious Francisco Yugo Inchaurre, who was being prosecuted in a case in Tlaxcala; it declared him free and made the judge pay the costs. Lisa was thus deprived of the decision of various matters which were pending, and he asked the king to order the tribunals to recognize his rights and powers. Lisa did not accompany his report with proofs from which a judgment of his complaints might be formed and the Council remembered the nature of the irregular requests which he had made during the twenty-four years in which he had served as governor of Tlaxcala, therefore it did not consider it wise to admonish the tribunals. The king decided that the excesses of the audiencia and the complaints of Lisa should be investigated. This was done two months later, and the audiencia cleared itself by showing that the natives of Atli-

²¹Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, July 30, 1819, AGI, 1148 (88-1-11). Audiencia de Méjico.

huetza came to it and asked assistance because the Indian tribunal of Tlaxcala, influenced by one Juan de Betolaza, had despoiled them of lands. They requested that an inquiry be made but not by Lisa or his lieutenants on account of the friendship of that governor with the powerful Betolaza, hence Mena was commissioned for the task and the lands were restored to the Indians. The result of the investigation was that on July 10, 1800, Lisa was relieved of the government of Tlaxcala and Manuel Baamonde was appointed as his successor.⁹²

There were too many lawyers in Mexico because the practice of law was the most honorable occupation for young creoles and everybody rushed pellmell into it. Carlos María de Bustamante, a lawyer of the audiencia of Guadalajara, represented the pitiful degradation of the position of lawyer in that audiencia and in all New Spain because of the large number of lawyers. The profession had become like an injurious monopoly and was ruinous to commerce, since the attorneys and their agents, as soon as the litigants submitted cases to them, distributed them among their lawyer friends with whom they had a pact to obtain one-half or one-third of the dues. The rest of the lawyers were therefore idle while part of them enjoyed the greatest abundance by means of those iniquitous contracts which injured both the litigants and the public, for the monopolist lawyers charged double fees. Honest men like Lucas Gálvez, assessor of the audiencia of Guadalajara, who did not receive a salary after so much work, could hardly support his family without resorting to irregular means, and there were many other lawyers in the same condition. Bustamante asked the king to reduce the lawyers to as small a number as possible and to limit that of attorneys and their agents, but the Council of the Indies did nothing about the matter.⁹³

⁹²Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Sept. 17, 1803, AGI, 1791 (91-7-1). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁹³Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Feb. 4, 1808, AGI, 1155 (88-1-19). Audiencia de Méjico.

Antonio de Argumedo, who had more than thirty years of experience in the colonies in various occupations, declared that it would take many reams of paper and a long time to tell how greatly justice suffered in America. In the partidos and jurisdictions outside of the capitals of the intendancies among one hundred judges there generally were only two lawyers and all the rest were merely laymen because those divisions did not yield sufficient funds to support lawyers and notaries. The subdelegates who served as judges, even when they acted in good faith, were very ignorant of judicial proceedings. Litigants suffered much and spent what they could not afford, there was incredible delay in cases, and valuable time was wasted for the superior tribunals so that they could not finish their work. Since not all lawyers were good, many individuals were ruined through their lawsuits. It was very easy for litigants, although they did not have reason for it, to find pettly lawyers to defend their cases and when those jurists lost their lawsuits or when sentence was given on account of ignorance or malice fault was often found with superior judges. Some lawyers were so ignorant that they blamed the contrary opinions of authors on the laws, but they were not the worst of their profession. Law was not a fixed science and ignorance or malice made it a science of chance not only for laymen but even for advocates, who were partly influenced by the proof drawn from a multitude of examples. Argumedo thought that a Spanish judge subdelegate should be appointed from among the inhabitants in places where there were at least twenty or twenty-five families of Spaniards; in jurisdictions lacking competent Spaniards the treasury should make provision for judges and assign them sufficient remuneration. He desired that the variations of authors about civil and other rights should be reduced to one clear opinion, which would not admit any interpretation, and be set down in a book in order that every lay judge could understand its literal meaning. If all subdelegates would have such a work, regulations for the royal revenues, and perfect instructions for notaries, they

would not commit so many errors. If those officials did not dare to pass sentence not in accord with a higher decision and would be fined for every one to the contrary, litigants would be satisfied and lawyers would not have a chance to blame the superior tribunals. He believed that the king should give order for the book to be written, but provision should be made in it for variation of the laws and supreme decisions according to the time and circumstances. Each tribunal of the audiencia districts could print annually a *quaderno* (small book) of the laws, royal pragmatics, and court decisions; a citation of what was formerly decided in every case should be given and the cost of the work could be paid from court fines. By conforming with those examples all the future decisions in the country would be just and uniform.

Another thing which caused distress was to read that criminals or those who were supposed to be such were in prison many years where they suffered continual torments, as they did especially in those outside of and distant from the capitals. The criminal chamber of the audiencia of Mexico remedied this condition somewhat by requiring a sworn report every six months relative to the criminals imprisoned by all the tribunals for crime and the process of their cases. Argumedo thought that much good would result if brevity of cases would be demanded with greater rigor in the capitals and outside of them and if a defender and lawyer of the poor might be appointed in each tribunal of the audiencia district, since lawyers for the poor were hard to find and their cases were delayed for years. He maintained that a person who was in prison for a year, if his crime was not proved, and he did not confess it, suffered without blame and should be set free; also every criminal, after a year was past, should have recourse to the tribunal where his case was being tried and to the king for his relief. Another amazing thing was the ease with which processes were lost and never decided; many expedientes were lost in the superior tribunals. Argumedo likewise believed in prison reform and that prisoners should have as much relief

as possible and what they needed if they wished to work. Decent criminals whose crimes did not deserve capital punishment should be separated from the others, but they might pay for this distinction if they had the means.⁹⁴

The number of the audiencias was not sufficient for good administration, since there were only two in all New Spain. The accumulation of business and expedientes in the audiencias of Mexico City and Guadalajara was such that the prompt dispatch of them was impossible, for those bodies took cognizance of all the higher judicial proceedings of the country. Litigants suffered irreparable injuries and loss of time because of the great distance of those supreme tribunals from their places of residence.⁹⁵ Some of the deputies to the Cortes from the overseas provinces asked for the establishment of new audiencias in Santo Domingo, the Provincias Internas, in Valladolid de Michoacán, in León de Nicaragua, in Maracaybo, and in Yucatan because the other audiencias were so far away from those places. The matter was considered by the Council of State on February 3, 1813; it was not thought advisable to erect an audiencia in Santo Domingo on account of the decreased population in the Spanish part of the island, which had only 40,000 inhabitants, and because it would not be just to impose additional financial burdens upon them. At first Durango was suggested for the capital of the audiencia of the Provincias Internas, which was to include Sonora, New Mexico, the Californias, and the northern part of Nueva Vizcaya, but later Chihuahua was decided upon since it was more centrally located and was the residence of the general commandant. Valladolid (now Morelia) was far distant from the capital of Mexico and the roads were dangerous, therefore it was believed that justice would be better administered if an audiencia would be situated in that city which was the capital of the bishopric and the intendancy. The audiencia was to consist of the two intendancies

⁹⁴Antonio de Argumedo al consejo de Indias. Huejutla, Dec. 20, 1803, num. 36, AGI, 1790 (91-6-25). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁹⁵Castillo Negrete, *México en el siglo XIX* . . . I, 36.

of Valladolid and Guanajuato, but in the end the Council did not deem the new supreme court to be absolutely necessary in those provinces.⁹⁶

José Martínez de la Pedrera, ex-deputy in the Cortes from Yucatan, told how the inhabitants of that province were burdened from time immemorial by arbitrariness and general disorder in the system of judicial administration, the scant learning of the judges, even of the greater part of those from Spain, and the fact that the lawyers all resided in the capital of the viceroyalty. The fate of criminal cases was sad because of the necessity which the laws imposed of inferior judges consulting the criminal chamber of the *audiencia* of Mexico. The distance from that tribunal, its much business, and the natural slowness of official matters were the other agents of inhumanity which made the confinement of criminals in the prisons of Yucatan almost eternal. When culprits entered prisons they often asked for death and more than once their corpses were found there. For years the people of Yucatan were convinced that the only remedy for the correct administration of justice was the erection of an *audiencia* in Mérida, therefore they instructed their deputy to the Cortes to try to bring this about.⁹⁷ The Council of State realized that an *audiencia* located in Mérida would be very useful and proposed that the judges should be paid from the community funds of the Indians but, as these were scarce, it was not thought wise to found the new supreme tribunal. Needless to say that none of the suggested *audiencias* were created, no matter how badly they were needed.⁹⁸ Finally the king declared that the people of Yucatan might take their cases to the *audiencia* of Guatemala in order to remedy the in-

⁹⁶El consejo de estado en Cádiz á 3 de Febrero de 1813 cumpliendo la real orden con que se le previno consultase su parecer sobre las proposiciones hechas a las Cortes por algunos diputados de las provincias de ultramar, en solicitud de que se establecen audiencias. . . AGI, 1146 (88-1-9). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁹⁷José Martínez de la Pedrera al ministro universal. Madrid, July 8, 1814, AGI, 1822 (92-1-8). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁹⁸El consejo de estado en Cádiz á 3 de Febrero de 1813 . . . AGI, 1146 (88-1-9). Audiencia de Méjico.

jury because important lawsuits did not have due course.⁹⁹

True it was that the cases handled by the audiencia of Mexico had greatly increased and the number of judges was not augmented correspondingly or the machinery made more efficient, consequently the processes were slower, business was piled up, and the supreme tribunal of the viceroyalty lost much of its early vigor. For example in 1801 both salas of the audiencia dealt with 3368 cases¹⁰⁰ and the next year the number rose to 3445.¹⁰¹ In 1803 there was a slight decrease to 3249 cases,¹⁰² but after that there was a steady increase again. In 1804 the cases treated were 3605¹⁰³ and the next year 3739.¹⁰⁴ Nothing adds to the prosperity and progress of a country as much as a good judicial system, but, when fault is found with it because of its weakness or inefficiency, it may become a source of the greatest dissatisfaction; this was true in Mexico at the eve of the revolution.

Certain individuals who were dominated by a real desire for the public welfare continued to try to better conditions in Mexico until the last moment, although they had little success, since the expedientes which they had drawn up with much work and expense were sure to be opposed by somebody, as for instance, the fiscal, and nothing came of them.¹⁰⁵

⁹⁹Decree of the king. Palacio, Oct. 16, 1814, AGI, 1822 (92-1-8). Audiencia de Méjico.

¹⁰⁰La audiencia de Mexico da cuenta a V. M. con testimonio de los diarios que acompaña haverse despachado en sus dos salas en el año proximo pasado de 1801. Mexico, Oct. 27, 1801, num. 64, AGI, 1792 (91-7-2). Audiencia de Méjico.

¹⁰¹La audiencia de Méjico al consejo. Mexico, May 27, 1803, AGI, 1798 (91-7-8). Audiencia de Méjico.

¹⁰²La audiencia de Mexico da cuenta a V. M. con testimonio de los diarios que acompaña haverse despachado en sus dos salas en el año proximo pasado de 1803. Mexico, May 26, 1804, AGI, 1800 (91-7-10). Audiencia de Méjico.

¹⁰³*Ibid.*, Mexico, April 25, 1805, AGI, 1803 (91-7-13). Audiencia de Méjico.

¹⁰⁴La audiencia de Mexico da cuenta a V. M. con testimonio de los diarios que acompaña . . . de los negocios despachados en 1805. Mexico, April 23, 1806, AGI, 1809 (91-7-19). Audiencia de Méjico.

¹⁰⁵José María Quirós, Memoria de ystituto en que se manifiesta, que ni España ha adquirido con la posesión de las Americas las grandes ventajas de que eran susceptibles. . . Vera Cruz, Dec. 31, 1812, AGI, 2516 (96-3-1). Audiencia de Méjico.

Numerous are the unfulfilled expedientes in the Archives of the Indies. Well-intentioned men who criticized the administrative system unfavorably for the good of the colony were not apt to be heeded, for the exalted authorities in Spain would not listen to anything derogatory to their great nation and its brilliant past. This happened in the case of the ex-Jesuit Clavigero's *History of Mexico* which was published in Italy in four volumes, but he also desired to have it printed in Spanish. On October 21, 1789, the Council of the Indies in three salas examined and considered the work. That body was shocked at some of the passages in the volumes which it declared were not in accord with the true history, honor of the nation, and its glorious conquest; hence it could not be published unless the obnoxious parts were changed, since they would furnish material for the pens of the enemies of Spain to decrease the splendor of the conquistadors and their admirable exploits. The truth is that Clavigero related some unpleasant facts which the Spaniards did not like to hear; he is said to have condemned the conquest and to have praised the Indians, comparing the Spanish with the Turks and the Mexicans with the Greeks oppressed by the Mohammedans.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁸Consulta del consejo de las Indias en pleno de tres salas. Oct. 17, 1800, AGI, 2650 (96-7-16). Audiencia de Méjico.

VIII

POLITICAL ADMINISTRATION (Continued)

All the viceroys of the nineteenth century were weak and inefficient, hence they added to the causes of discontent and could not bolster up the declining administration. José María Quirós declared that most viceroys knew no more about the country than the road over which they traveled from Vera Cruz to the capital and then they only saw what was most apparent; the same thing happened with all the other superior authorities. Ordinarily they entered and came out of their offices with no more knowledge of the extensive country of New Spain than what they heard or learned from the inexact information of those near at hand, who could not possibly be enlightened relative to so many branches of administration, agriculture, industry, commerce, the condition of the population, the means of its subsistence, education, and how to harmonize the interests of Europeans and Americans. He said that the second Revillagigedo was one of the most active viceroys and just when he became well informed and learned how to benefit his enormous viceroyalty his term expired and he was not permitted to remain in America any longer.¹ An unknown revolutionary writer asserted that the viceroys had been absolute sovereigns and that among all civilized nations there was no worse government than theirs in all America, and that despotism and bad administration in the past caused the insurrection, not the priest Hidalgo.²

¹Memoria de ystituto en que se manifiesta que ni España ha adquirido con la posesión de las Americas las grandes ventajas de que eran susceptibles. . . Vera Cruz, Dec. 31, 1812, AGI, 2516 (96-3-1). Audiencia de Méjico.

²La audiencia de Mexico informa á V. M. el infelicísimo estado de las cosas políticas en Nueva España. . . Mexico, Nov. 18, 1813, AGI, 136-7-9. Indiferente General de Nueva España.

The alert Abad Queipo believed that the whole governmental system had greatly relaxed after the death of the glorious Charles III, who maintained a vigorous administration in Spain and America in accordance with the spirit of the laws and suppressed all tendencies toward revolution. He thought that the dependencies could not be held except by a just, wise, and energetic government reduced to an efficient system of which the colonies should be a part and which should be observed inviolably in the metropolis and the overseas possessions.³ In Queipo's opinion the viceroys, captains-general, and governors of the provinces should always be extraordinary men with proved military talents and of firm characters, and not the mediocre individuals who were so often appointed. He advocated constant alternation and numerical equality between Europeans and Americans in all civil and ecclesiastical positions; there should be much care to reward the merits of the natives of the colonial provinces, placing them in the church, the army, navy, and in all branches of public administration in the whole monarchy, since such a system would strengthen the social bonds of the overseas possessions with the metropolis and vice versa. The good bishop hoped that such a system would cure the vices from which America suffered because the children were believed better and more worthy than their fathers.⁴

The people of Mexico were opposed to Marquina as viceroy, since little was known about him and they thought that he was only a tool of the despicable minister Godoy. Bad reports concerning him came from the Philippines where he had been governor; therefore the inhabitants of the colony were not very enthusiastic to have him for their chief executive.⁵ Marquina presented himself in Vera Cruz

³Representación a S. M. en 20 de Junio de 1815 . . . sobre la situación política de nuestras Americas. G.

⁴Queipo al rey. Valladolid, Oct. 1, 1814, AGI, 2571 (96-4-26). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁵Andrés Cavo, *Los tres siglos de Méjico durante el gobierno español hasta la entrada del ejército tigarante*. . . (Jalapa, 1870), *suplemento de Bustamante*, arts. 206-208, p. 657.

without credentials after having been a prisoner and transported from an enemy country. Since the ayuntamiento did not have notice of his election and he did not exhibit the royal dispatches, it doubted whether he ought to be recognized as viceroy until the certainty of his appointment was made known.⁶ That body did not decide to obey him until the intendant governor assured it that everything was well, and troops were collected because Vera Cruz was exposed to enemies.⁷ A representation was also sent from Mexico City to the Council of the Indies asking what to do because Marquina arrived before any information of his appointment had been given, which had never been done with other viceroys.⁸ The required documents were finally sent to Mexico and notices of Marquina's appointment were distributed among the cities of the kingdom.⁹ While viceroy of New Spain Marquina was accused of engaging in contraband trade with foreigners nesting at Jamaica, but he was an administrator of tolerably fair capabilities and did not harm the country.

Iturrigaray was even worse than Marquina, although the critical conditions required that a man of the highest integrity and efficiency should be at the helm in Mexico. This viceroy was nevertheless dominated by self-interest, was a man of scant intelligence, and desired to gain profit from his high position.¹⁰ He increased his wealth by the illicit sale of merchandise and offices, from a levy on quicksilver, the acceptance of forbidden gifts, and by other fraudulent means.¹¹ Scandalous permits were given in favor of clandestine commerce; he sacrificed the sacred rights of the king for his personal and private interests. He bartered the financial, political, and military offices of the kingdom, which were subject to scandalous overbidding, and he appointed

⁶Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, Feb. 20, 1802, AGI, 1140 (88-1-3). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁷*Ibid.*, Feb. 1, 1802, AGI, 1787 (91-6-22). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁸*Ibid.*, Jan. 20, 1802, AGI, 1787 (91-6-22). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁹*Ibid.*, Feb. 1, 1802, AGI, 1787 (91-6-22). Audiencia de Méjico.

¹⁰Riva Palacio, *México á través de los siglos*, III, 40.

¹¹Alamán, I, 47-48; Hernández y Dávalos, I, 643-644; Castillo Negrete, *op. cit.* I, 49.

or removed whomever he wished. Some individuals had to sacrifice on "gratifications" the emoluments of two or three years assigned to their personal work. The laws for the equitable distribution of quicksilver were not observed, since he listened to the entreaties of wealthy miners and favored them. In the army severe discipline was relaxed and licenses and powers were granted or rather sold, thus the country would have been unprepared if the enemy had attacked it. He set aside the royal order relative to the junta of consolidation because of his monstrous ambition, and he sold everything that he could from which money might be made—offices, favors, distinctions, and licenses.¹²

Consequently the residencia at the end of his term, fell heavily upon Iturrigaray; he was condemned to pay 119,000 pesos for merchandise illegally introduced into New Spain at his arrival in 1803, under the name of clothing, twice the amount of 9684 ounces of gold, and 4000 pesos which he or his wife had received as favors in the distribution of quicksilver and in contracts for paper for the manufacture of tobacco. The same penalty was imposed upon him on account of the sums received from concessions of different offices and favors.¹³ The wily Iturrigaray placed his own personal ambition before his duty to maintain strictly the royal authority; he was a man of short sight and vanity, a victim of his ambition. He seemed to think that Spain could not resist the French and was lax in seconding the ardent Spanish patriotism. Perhaps he desired to found a dynasty in Mexico, for he seemed inclined to favor the purposes of the promoters of independence. The men who desired freedom made him serve their plans and they flattered his thirst for domination, but without discovering his true aspirations. The viceroy could not find means to harmonize his conduct with the situation; he decided to

¹²Extracto de la representación que la junta de diputados y electores de la minería de Guanajuato hizo sobre la conducta del Sr. Iturrigaray. In Hernández y Dávalos, I, 638-640.

¹³Alamán, I, 264-265. According to Bustamante the total fine was 384,241 pesos.

favor all of the opinions and wanted to keep on the good side of everybody, thus he followed a vascillating policy.¹⁴ He soon found himself in the midst of two parties without a definite plan of conduct. His ambiguous behavior made the seditious believe that he decided in their favor, hence they threw off the mask and began to attack openly the rights of the monarchy, but the attempt to establish a national junta caused the imprisonment of Iturrigaray.¹⁵ The suspicions concerning the conduct of the viceroy had increased so much that some persons thought he was in agreement with the contemptible Godoy to hand the kingdom over to Napoleon; others believed that he wanted independence and desired to crown himself in America. Since he was surrounded by flatterers, lived in the greatest carelessness, and used his unlimited authority to give promotions to those whom he believed deserving of his favor, it looked as if he were gathering partisans and it hastened the action finally taken against him.¹⁶

After the deposition of Iturrigaray in 1808 the people asked that the *pliego de providencia*, or the statement sent by the king to designate who should fill the place of a deceased viceroy until his successor arrived, should not be opened because at the time when it was drawn up the favorite Godoy governed Spain, for if it were consulted the command in Mexico would only go to one of his followers. The document was not opened and old General Pedro Garibay was chosen to fill the viceregal chair.¹⁷ He was recognized without opposition by all the authorities of the country and many organizations and individuals hastened to offer their services to him.¹⁸ Garibay, who was seventy years old

¹⁴Riva Palacio, III, 44-45, 40.

¹⁵Representación á S. M. en 20 de Junio de 1815 por el obispo electo de Michoacán el Ilmo. Sr. D. Manuel Abad y Queipo sobre la situación política de nuestras Americas. MS. G.

¹⁶Judicio del estado político en que se hallaba la Nueva España. In Hernández y Dávalos, I, 634-635.

¹⁷Acta de la audiencia y real acuerdo, en que se manifiestan las razones por qué no se abrieron los pliegos de providencia . . . *ibid.*, I, 593.

¹⁸Alamán, I, 257-259. Among them was Agustín Iturbide who was then a sub-lieutenant of the infantry regiment of Valladolid.

at the time, was too feeble to meet such a critical situation, and was influenced by his wife and other individuals of his family. He was a man of honor and good habits, but lacked prestige and could do nothing except what was agreed to by the audiencia. It might be said that the supreme tribunal usurped extraordinary authority which was sovereign, defined and extended the powers of the viceroy, and interpreted the laws, although Garibay went on governing in the name of Ferdinand VII.¹⁹ The impotent Garibay did not have any military foresight, for he dismembered the canton of Xalapa, withdrew to their provinces the regiments of militia, and the column of foot soldiers because it was understood that some officers spoke freely about independence. According to Queipo the evil should have been remedied by the punishment of the officials, instead the militia was put in contact with its neighbors, friends, and parents so that it could communicate the ideas more freely.²⁰ Various measures were taken to win popular favor and to remove the motives of discontent, for example, the absolute suspension of the hated decree of 1804 relative to the alienation of landed property and amortization of Pious Funds, which has been discussed; however none of the provisions were sufficient to unite minds once divided and Garibay was not the man for the place.²¹ Soon the very people who had made him viceroy asked the Spanish government to send to Mexico without delay an energetic viceroy. They repeated the request when they saw the vascillating course of Garibay. The junta of Seville therefore did not confirm Garibay in office, but selected the archbishop, Francisco Javier de Lizana y Beaumont, whose fidelity was not doubted and who was generally respected, to succeed him.²²

¹⁹ Alamán, I, 279-281, 285.

²⁰ Representación á S. M. en 20 de Junio de 1815 . . . sobre la situación política de nuestras Americas. MS, G.

²¹ Alamán, I, 287-288. The same thing had been done in Spain by the junta of Sevilla, as the decree was likewise hated there.

²² *Ibid.*, I, 300-301. At the end of ten months Garibay returned to his former obscurity as poor as when he came out of it. It was necessary for Yermo and his friends to give him 500 pesos a month salary.

Lizana was a virtuous, sincere, and very simple man who did not know the human heart or have any light in political matters. In order to devote himself entirely to the affairs of the viceroyalty he handed his archbishopric over to his cousin, the inquisitor Alfaro, who became in fact archbishop and viceroy, since he intervened in all gubernatorial matters.²³ Many influential persons of the American party took advantage of the weak character of the viceroy and the state of his health. Lizana had helped to imprison Iturrigaray and by a change of principles he declared himself against his former party and began to persecute it, though its members were the chief support of the Spanish domination in Mexico. This change of principles of the viceroy in such critical circumstances gave the greatest impulse to the revolution.²⁴ The ease with which 3,176,835 pesos were collected for Spain showed the confidence that still existed in the government.²⁵

Abad Queipo said that Lizana fell into the clutches of the insurgent faction and governed the kingdom in accord with its opinion without knowing it. Things came to such a state that the viceroy believed the gachupines were trying to arrest or assassinate him, therefore he fortified the viceregal palace with cannon and troops, varied the military policy, and persecuted openly the regent of the audiencia, Aguirre, and various other Europeans, who were the most vigorous defenders of the monarchy, because he believed them to be conspirators against his life. The simple man did not know that if the chief Europeans plotted against him, it could not be for any other reason than because his government was contrary to the preservation of the Spanish monarchy and favorable to the rebels who tried to divide

²³Representación á S. M. en 20 de Junio de 1815 por el obispo electo de Michoacán el Ilmo. Sr. D. Manuel Abad y Queipo. . . p. 6. G.

²⁴Alamán, I, 302-304.

²⁵*Ibid.*, I, 305. In the fund raised there were 400,000 pesos which the viceroy took by force from the house of the duke of Terranova, the marqués of the valley of Oaxaca, a descendant of Hernán Cortés, although on the list it appeared as a voluntary loan.

it.²⁶ The effete Lizana thought it was necessary to give permanent form to a consultative junta established by Garibay in order to deal with cases of treason, and on September 21, 1809, he passed a decree calling it the "Junta of Security and Good Order." All those who disturbed the peace of the kingdom or who were suspected of adhesion to the French party by means of papers, conversation, or seditious conduct were to be subject to this tribunal. In the same month of September the first symptoms of insurrection were experienced in Valladolid.²⁷

There was a decided weakening of the frontiers under such inefficient and vascillating viceroys. On the borders of the north the rebel tribes went on with their depredations and ruined some provinces, because viceregal authority was very lax there and months were spent in sending orders back and forth from the capital. Governors and commandants were apt to take their own time to carry out the viceroy's commands and in the meantime the ravages of the Indians continued. Foreigners and adventurers began to take advantage of the situation more and more to make encroachments upon Spanish territory. Some, like Philip Nolan, became very bold indeed; that filibuster with a band of contrabandists invaded the northern provinces of Mexico in 1801 and advanced as far south as Nuevo Santander with a view to purchasing horses and erecting small forts. Nolan was killed in the encounter with the troops of Lieutenant Miguel Múquiz and his partisans were dispersed or imprisoned.²⁸ At the same time word was received that the English, allied with some tribes of indigines of the upper Mississippi, intended to attack the Spanish possessions, and the presence of Nolan and the boldness with which he forged ahead made the Spaniards believe that his expedition was the beginning of English operations.²⁹

²⁶Representación á S. M. en el 20 de Junio de 1815 por el obispo electo de Michoacán el Ilmo. Sr. D. Manuel Abad y Queipo. . . pp. 6-7. G.

²⁷Alamán, I, 313-314.

²⁸*Instrucciones que los vireyes de Nueva España dejaron a sus sucesores*, 166.

²⁹Riva Palacio, II, 897.

Antonio de San José Muro, a citizen of Belen, declared that the Anglo-Americans electrified the ambition of their small children with the hope of taking possession of Mexico, and he thought that this would happen if Spain did not occupy the left bank of the Mississippi and fortify it with a numerous population, since that frontier was the weakest part of the monarchy. The superior government should not lose a moment to protect a territory of more value than all of the Anglo-American colonies. He said that many rivers to the north of Tampico served as smuggling centers and those fertile lands would be lost on account of the lack of commerce. He cited as an example the region of the river of Soto la Marina, forty leagues north of Tampico in Nuevo Santander, and how difficult it was for its inhabitants to obtain goods from Vera Cruz. He thought that it would be much easier for the people from those northern rivers to navigate directly to Havana and Spain in order to obtain the merchandise needed, but naturally the merchants of Vera Cruz vigorously resisted this. The wise man realized that giving those regions permission to carry on commerce would be the simplest means to protect them from the pernicious nearness of the Anglo-Americans, who did not cease to stir up insurrection in those miserable people. Many points on the Gulf of Mexico were in a defenseless condition and he asserted that it was a great mistake to publish in the *Gazeta de Madrid* the progress and achievements of New Orleans since it ceased to be a Spanish possession. Muro showed that the captaincies-general, including those of the islands, were independent of each other, and in a state of anarchy and insurrection; with the attack of an enemy they were weaker than if they would be governed federally. The remedy which he suggested was the formation of a general junta in Mexico City, composed of voters whom each captain-general should appoint, to sustain the rights of the monarchy, repel foreign attacks, and to scatter any local insurrections. Such a junta would exercise the functions of provincial sovereignty and organize all the forces of land and sea in case of danger from

foreign attempts. The Spanish administration did not consider seriously the projects of Muro although they found favor with some of the creoles in Mexico.⁸⁰

Under the decadent political administration internal conspiracies multiplied and discontent grew more and more. Throughout the Spanish régime in Mexico there were revolts and rumors of revolts against those in authority, like that of Martín Cortés, the Indian uprisings, negro insurrections, disturbances during the expulsion of the Jesuits, but they were not very serious nor frequent. But with the approach of the nineteenth century they recurred in rapid succession, which showed that a strong undercurrent of dissatisfaction existed in the colony. In 1794 a bold plot to overthrow the government in New Spain originated with Juan Guerrero, a native of Estepona in the kingdom of Granada. He had come from the Philippines as an accountant (*contador*) on the vessel *San Andrés*, was detained in Acapulco on account of illness, and when he recovered he went to the capital demanding that his salary should be paid. This was refused by Viceroy Revillagigedo who told him to go to Manila. Guerrero was poverty stricken and therefore planned a revolution; he thought of taking possession of the galleon on his return to Manila and conquering some province of China with it. First he decided to surprise the chief of the garrison of Mexico City and threaten to kill him if he did not sign an order to put at his disposal fifty-five men of the regiments, let him march with them to the prison of La Acordada to free the eighty criminals in it, and do the same with the court prison. Then with that band of robbers he would get control of the viceroy, archbishop, judges of the audiencia, and rich merchants; he would put a banner on the viceregal palace calling the people to liberty, free the Indians from tribute, get possession of Vera Cruz, and open the port to the boats of all nations, but not allow the news to be taken to Spain. The plan was communicated

⁸⁰Antonio de San José Muro, *Reflexiones sobre el contenido de algunos papeles dirigidos al gobierno general de la nación*. Belén de Mexico, May 9, 1811, AGI, 1896 (92-5-4). Audiencia de Méjico.

to Juan Vara, chaplain of the regiment of La Corona, a Galician, whom Guerrero promised to make archbishop. It was also revealed to José Rodríguez Valencia, an Andalusian wig-maker, who was to become ambassador to the United States in order to seek aid from that country; several other prominent men foolishly entered into the conspiracy. The alcalde of the court, Pedro Valenzuela, got word of the insurrection and on September 15, Guerrero was imprisoned, and his accomplices soon afterwards. By royal order of March 27, 1800, Guerrero was assigned to the presidio of Peñon on the coast of Africa for six years, Vara and Rodríguez were not permitted to live in America, and the others were punished according to their guilt.⁸¹

At the same time another Spanish adventurer, Francisco Vázquez, alias Benítez Gálvez, a naval officer, denounced a conspiracy which he said existed among the most notable people of Mexico. He announced that the count of Pérez Gálvez, colonel of the regiment of dragoons of *El Príncipe*, had confided in him relative to an insurrection which he had formed with many subjects of the capital and other parts of the kingdom in order to withdraw from the monarchical government and convert it into a republic, for which purpose they had established correspondence with the English general of the island of Jamaica. They wanted to put themselves under the protection of England, which was at war with Spain at that time, and they had already received two million pesos from the governor of that island. They hoped to kill the viceroy and the archbishop, open the prisons, and take possession of the mint; the plot was to be inaugurated by pretending to rob the treasury of the city. Luckily the project was discovered, investigated, and the denouncer was sent to Spain.⁸²

The interesting *machete* conspiracy of 1799 might have produced a destructive revolution in New Spain, but fortunately it too was detected. The instigator of the plot

⁸¹Alamán, I, 128-131; *Ordenes de la corona*, MS, III, 177-180. BL.

⁸²Consulta de consejo de las Indias. Aug. 13, 1803, AGI, 1140 (88-1-3). Audiencia de Méjico; Alamán, I, 131-132.

was Pedro Portilla, collector of duties of the capital in the small *plaza* of Santa Catarina, and his associates were drawn from the lower classes, whose only weapons were the broad short swords called machetes, from which the rebellion took its name. The thirteen conspirators were all relatives or friends of Portilla and they held their meetings in a house where they had accumulated some machetes. The purpose of the conspiracy was to make a revolution, take possession of the kingdom, free the prisoners, kill the gauchupines, confiscate the property of the wealthy, imprison the authorities, and decide whether the government should be like that of the United States. On October 10, Francisco de Aguirre, a cousin of Portilla employed as a guard of tobacco, revealed the plans to Viceroy Azanza, who immediately summoned the members of the *audiencia* to decide upon the measures to be taken. On November 9, without disturbance the thirteen chief conspirators were surprised at their rendezvous, arrested, and tried; the greatest care was taken not to excite the people.⁸³

Creole conspiracies were the most feared in Mexico from this time until the outbreak of the struggle for independence because there was a steadily growing hatred of the American-born Spaniards for the peninsulars. Viceroy Azanza had informed the Council of the Indies and the king that the Portilla insurrection in the capital was stirred up by the creoles against the Europeans. He stated that the insurgents were young, ignorant, and of no consequence; their number was small, therefore the government did not need to fear.⁸⁴ Viceroy Marquina found papers relating to this plot among those of his predecessor, entitled "Projected Conspiracy of the Creoles against the Europeans" and he investigated the matter, which seemed to have been the same as the machete incident. He said the case was not as serious as it seemed at first sight, that there was no foundation for

⁸³Riva Palacio, II, 888; Alamán, I, 132-134; *Suplemento de Bustamante to Cavo*, art. 195, p. 649.

⁸⁴Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, Nov. 29, 1802, AGI, 1140 (88-1-3). Audiencia de Méjico.

it, and that he hoped to banish the prejudicial ideas that there was a spirit of enmity among the Europeans and creoles.⁸⁵ He believed that the great distance of Mexico from Spain, the scant resources of that colony to sustain authority with force if necessary, the influence found everywhere in the unfortunate epoch which declared liberty, the clandestine trade along the coasts, and the extended English possessions were the causes of dissatisfaction with the government. He declared that there was discontent between the Europeans and creoles which should be extinguished at any cost, although it would be difficult to do. The administration should be very careful not to give nourishment to this enmity, and should not cease to take measures to suppress it and cause it to be forgotten. Marquina thought that it would increase if conversation were allowed on the subject of the opposition and ill-will among the two groups of society, which tended to divide more and more. The criticism also existed in New Spain that those who took cognizance of cases were creoles and the judges who passed sentence on them were gachupines; the viceroy asserted that if this were true, it would only increase their hatred.⁸⁶

During Marquina's administration a scheme to reestablish the Aztec empire was also discovered among the natives of Nueva Galicia. The leader of the movement was an Indian by the name of Mariano, son of the governor of Tlaxcala, who pretended to make himself king and to have relations with the people of Colatlan and Nayarit, and he sent circulars to many of the Indian towns. He was supposed to have been abetted by Count Miravalles of Mexico City because of his possessing large estates in the vicinity of Tepic, the home of the principal plotters; likewise it was believed that the English had knowledge of the conspiracy and would send ships to San Blas to aid it. José Fernando

⁸⁵Felix Berenguer Marquina á Antonio Porcel. Mexico, March 27, 1802, num. 178 reservada, AGI, 1785 (91-6-20). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁸⁶Marquina á Urquijo. Expone su consepito sobre la causa relativa a una conspiración de criollos. Mexico, Oct. 27, 1800, num. 107. AGI, leg. 9, Papeles de estado. BL.

de Abascal, president of the audiencia of Guadalajara, obtained news of the project and informed the viceroy, who had Mariano and all his accomplices arrested. There were so many of them apprehended that it was necessary to imprison them in a convent since the prisons were not sufficient to contain them. Only in the town of Santa Fé Iscatán was there an uprising. The evidence was not strong enough to convict any of the participants, but some of them died in the hospital of Tepic on account of illness. It was feared that the conspiracy extended to the Yaqui Indians and those of Sinaloa, but they remained quiet. The town of Tepic was alarmed in the same year, 1801, by the insurgents of Nayarit who went down there with the object of taking the fortress; however it is not known whether those insurgents were in agreement with the plan of Mariano. The inhabitants of Tepic destroyed the rebels of Nayarit in a place called El Rodeo, but the incident alarmed the Spanish government, which feared a greater revolution.⁸⁷

Among the papers of Viceroy Iturrigary was found one relative to the formation of a secret junta called the "American Association," the purpose of which was to conquer New Spain—"to emancipate it from all dependence and subjection to European owners, erecting in it an independent government, allied to the United States and under its protection." The first step was to take Baton Rouge and then they would liberate the adjacent territories from the oppression of the Spanish tyrants and free all Mexico from the yoke which it abhorred. The "American Association" counted on the aid of two other expeditions that were to be made, one from Bejar and the other from Pánuco, which were to consist of individuals from the northern republic and Mexico.⁸⁸

In 1809 there was a great commotion in Vera Cruz when the French ship *Vayllan*, arrived from the island of Guadalupe with bundles of official documents from the French

⁸⁷*Suplemento de Bustamente* to Cavo, arts. 206-208, p. 657; Alamán, I, 134-136; Riva Palacio, II, 897.

⁸⁸Genaro García, *Documentos históricos Mexicanos* (Mexico, 1910), I, 1-2.

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the empire for the Mexican authorities. The people of that port suspected, without foundation, that two alien persons came on the vessel and were hidden by the commandant of the port; it was rumored that the boat was a contraband ship. Eight of the inhabitants with a picket of lancers went to Antigua to find out whether the two men were concealed in that town and they insisted on the delivery and the reading of the official letters. Ceballos, the commandant, had threatened with death anybody who would go near the French vessel and the people were so exasperated that they asked for the head of the military official; consequently he had to be taken to the fortress of San Juan de Ulloa for safety. A regidor read the French letters in a loud voice and then they were burned, but it was not possible to calm the people, the number of whom kept increasing from half past two o'clock in the afternoon to seven in the evening. They burned the house of Ceballos, his furniture, and other houses and kept shouting "Death to Ceballos." The disturbance might have been very serious, if the governor, Pedro Telmo Landero, and the members of the ayuntamiento had not conducted themselves so well and with so much tact. The commotion was finally calmed without bloodshed, but it showed how easily the least event was able to excite the people at that time.³⁹ The viceroy later declared the commandant, Ciriaco Ceballos, innocent and perfectly free from any infidelity which the people attributed to him in the tumult.⁴⁰

Viceroy Lizana made known the discontent in the capital in the same year caused by a party which declaimed against the deposition of Viceroy Garibay and discredited the measures of the archbishop viceroy. Marcos Berazaluze, a restless and haughty man, one of the most discontented members of the group, had gone to Cádiz to spread and publish his pernicious ideas. The chief supporters of the dissatisfied

³⁹Don Pedro Garibay á Pedro de Cevallos. Mexico, Feb. 20, 1809, num. 2, AGI, 1321 (89-1-19). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴⁰Francisco Xavier Venegas á Eusebio de Bardoxy y Azara. Mexico, April 13, 1811, num. 43, AGI, *ibid*.

party were the judges of the audiencia, Ciriaco González Carvajal and Guillermo de Aguirre; the same group of men had helped to overthrow Iturrigaray, and Gabriel de Yermo was the chief of it.⁴¹

When the year 1810 approached the restlessness and rumors of conspiracies increased. The conde de la Cadena, intendant of Puebla, directed to Viceroy Garibay an official letter signed by Justo Patricio Payseron in which the latter said that Spain was invaded by French troops and was going to groan under the yoke of Napoleon; therefore he exhorted the Europeans and Americans to unite and proclaim the independence of New Spain in order to keep it for the king. The viceroy tried to find out who Payseron was and two suspected persons were imprisoned, but a certain Julián de Castillejos was proved to be the author of the letter.⁴² On April 16, 1810, the viceroy reported that various subjects of Mexico had proposed to put themselves under the protection of England as an independent country in case the French conquered Spain.⁴³ Josef Luis Rodríguez Alconedo, Josef Ignacio Rodríguez Alconedo, and Vicente Gómez were tried for plotting against the authorities of the capital. They entertained the project to assassinate the gachupines in order to crown an Indian, but the Council of the Indies did not consider their act of any importance. The prisoners were sent to Spain; when they arrived the Council thought they had suffered enough on the voyage, absolved them of their charges, and permitted them to return to America.⁴⁴

The political situation grew worse under Viceroy Lizana, who was absolutely unable to better it. Antonio de San José Muro told the king that he would be deprived of the patrimony of the Americas if he did not try seriously to better

⁴¹Francisco Xavier de Lizana á Benítez de Hermida. Mexico, Sept. 26, 1809, num. 17 reservada, AGI, 1321 (89-1-19). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴²Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Cádiz, July 5, 1810, num. 6, AGI, 1145 (88-1-8). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴³Francisco Xavier Lizana á Francisco Saavedra. Mexico, April 16, 1810, num. 52, AGI, 1321 (89-1-19). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴⁴Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Cádiz, Dec. 15, 1810, num. 9, AGI, 1145 (88-1-8). Audiencia de Méjico.

conditions. He advised that the Indians, negroes who spoke Spanish, the Spanish-Americans, and the Europeans should be made happy, each one according to his class; the emulation of some and the mistrust of others should be destroyed. He thought that the establishment of banks, houses of security, and exchange, the use of provincial money, and the employment of Americans as attendants of the palace and in the troops would cause the people to be better satisfied.⁴⁶ Finally the regency of Spain removed Viceroy Lizana on account of his age and infirmities, nevertheless it granted him a large cross of the Order of Charles III for his services. It had been a mistake for the central junta ever to appoint an archbishop in such critical circumstances, but it was a much greater evil for the regency to confer the administration of Mexico upon the audiencia. Experience showed that in ordinary times many inconveniences had resulted from the rule of that tribunal, and in critical conditions, when great activity and energy were necessary, a body of lawyers, slow in their proceedings, was not adequate to govern. The only thing that the regency thought of was that the audiencia had been the chief support of the Spanish party and had helped to depose Iturrigaray. During the four months of the weak rule of that body the revolution in the country got a good start.⁴⁶

The far-seeing Abad Queipo asked to have a military viceroy of great learning, activity, and efficiency sent to New Spain and that he might bring with him ammunition and a sufficient number of competent inferior military men to aid to discipline and organize the troops. It was rumored in the colony that the king had established a council composed of four famous and well-known individuals to direct difficult matters for the viceroy and to counterbalance his unlimited power in those cases in which the laws constituted him the "other Ego" of the sovereign. Queipo thought that this was a very wise thing to do and would be enthusi-

⁴⁶Antonio de San José Muro al Señor Don Miguel de Lardizábal. April 2, 1810, num. 1, AGI, 1896 (92-5-4). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴⁶Alamán, I, 327-329, 339.

astically received in Mexico.⁴⁷ The bishop said that the administrations of Garibay, the archbishop viceroy, and of the audiencia were all notorious for their lack of energy and were afflicted with imbecility, which was the greatest of all vices of a government in such critical circumstances. All those governments had had at their disposal a well-disciplined military force of 20,000 or 25,000 men which should have been sufficient to check the insurrection.⁴⁸

Then the regency did try seriously to find an energetic and efficient viceroy for Mexico after the damage had been done. Francisco Javier Venegas, a soldier who had won distinction in the Napoleonic Wars, and a man of much talent and learning, was appointed by the regency to overcome the disasters which had been wrought in the country. He was a middle aged man, active in the dispatch of business; he was honest and disinterested and if circumstances had been normal, without doubt, he would have been a good executive. He delayed his journey to the capital longer than did his predecessors in order to inform himself of the conditions of the country and to confer with Bishop Campillo and Intendant Flon of Puebla.⁴⁹ One of his first acts was to summon a gathering in the halls of the palace and to read the proclamation of the regency to the Americans. He enumerated the favors granted to various individuals of the capital on account of gifts, loans, and other services rendered the country, the king, and religion. A plan was next considered to raise money and some lay persons subscribed immediately as did the archbishop with three thousand pesos; this was the most stupid thing that could have been done since the people were tired of demands for money and the favors went largely to those who had helped to imprison Iturrigaray so that it looked as if they were rewards

⁴⁷Representación al rey. Valladolid, May 30, 1810, AGI, 2375 (95-4-2). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴⁸Representación a S. M. en 20 de Junio de 1815 . . . sobre la situación política de nuestras Americas. G.

⁴⁹Alamán, I, 340-341. Venegas was a nephew of Francisco de Saavedra, one of the regents, and to that fact he owed his appointment.

for the act. The indignation of the Americans was excited and consequently the cause of the revolution was aided.⁵⁰

Venegas did not have knowledge of the country or of the people and he was very distrustful of the soldiers. He was without an army since, at his arrival in the capital on September 14, 1810, the few forces of which he could have made use were scattered from Xalapa to San Luis Potosí; but his military talents, his calmness, and incessant work helped him to prepare an army.⁵¹ He summoned a junta of the consulado and various high functionaries to provide for the security of the capital and to form military bodies of the inhabitants who could serve at their own expense; all Europeans and Americans sixteen years old who could support themselves without salary were to be enlisted. The new viceroy likewise published a decree of the regency of May 26, which declared the Indians free from tribute and made provision to pay subdelegates salaries from the royal treasury, also to reestablish the old system of repartimientos in a manner that would be convenient to the people.⁵² The latter was a foolish retrogressive measure and could not satisfy the group of individuals opposed to the repartimientos, which had caused so much distress in the past; like so many Spanish provisions it was only a way to shift responsibility or find the easiest way out of a difficult situation. Venegas succeeded in keeping the capital peaceful and defeated the army of Hidalgo, composed of more than 40,000 men, in the battle of Aculco. He then occupied himself with the reconquest of the revolted districts and the restoration of order in them. Abad Queipo maintained that Venegas was worthy of the appointment as viceroy and of the national confidence, since he knew how to fulfil the expectation of the inhabitants in such critical and difficult circumstances; if he had come to Mexico fifteen days earlier, he could have avoided misfortunes, but if he had

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, I, 342-343.

Queipo, Segunda representación que dirige a la regencia. . . Nov. 21, 1810, AGI, 2383 (95-4-10). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁵²Alamán, I, 388-389.

arrived fifteen days later New Spain would have been lost forever.⁵³ Nevertheless Venegas declared that, although the arms of the king generally triumphed over the rebels, the means had not been found to establish good faith and to reconcile the minds of the natives; unfortunately the class which supported the revolution abounded in the capital and in all Mexico more than in the other kingdoms of America. He believed that even if the creoles would obtain their desire to hold all the high offices in New Spain, there would always be hatred as long as there were rich Europeans and ruined creoles in the country; the generosity of the government had no effect upon this animosity, and those sent to Spain because of indifference were pardoned and returned to the colony.⁵⁴ The viceroy urged literary corporations and learned individuals to write against the revolution and many of the brotherhoods, provincials of religious orders, the university, and college of lawyers responded. He also offered 10,000 pesos reward to anybody who might take Hidalgo and his two companions, Allende and Aldama, dead or alive, and he ordered that all Hidalgo's writings should be burned in the principal plaza by the hand of the executioner.⁵⁵

The rebel coalition could not win Venegas over to its ideas, therefore it conspired in Mexico against his life and plotted in Cádiz for his recall, in order that the viceroyalty might go to General Calleja, who was susceptible to flattery and for whom the insurgents formed a party.⁵⁶ When it was rumored in New Spain that Venegas was to be removed, the priests of the capital, the bishop of Puebla, and the

⁵³Segunda representación . . . a la regencia. Nov. 21, 1810, AGI, 2383 (95-4-10). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁵⁴Francisco Venegas al Exmo. Sor. secretario de estado y del despacho de gracia y justicia. Mexico, Nov. 24, 1812, AGI, 3176 (99-7-15). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁵⁵Alamán, I, 393, 397; Francisco Venegas al Exmo. S. D. Eusebio Bardoxi y Azara. Mexico, Sept. 27, 1810, num. 3, AGI, 3169 A (99-7-8). Audiencia de Méjico; Francisco Venegas al Exmo. S. ministro . . . de estado. Mexico, Feb. 20, 1811, num. 31, *ibid.*

⁵⁶Queipo, Representación a S. M. en 20 de Junio de 1815 . . . sobre la situación política de nuestras Americas. G.

members of the criminal chamber of the audiencia entreated the regency not to dismiss him until the country was entirely pacified, even if he should resign as it was feared he would. The body of priests spoke about his services in the most glowing words. It declared that in eight months the greater part of the burning of property was stopped and the principal chiefs had been killed or imprisoned because of the military and political talents, experience, practical knowledge, integrity, and zeal of the viceroy; from the moment he took charge of the administration he had worked incessantly day and night without sparing fatigue to destroy the revolutionists, as had been done for the greater part, and he would continue to do this and justly win the title of "Reconqueror of America." The ecclesiastics added that to his disinterestedness and prudence were united mercy and justice which made the people love him and also the rebels who repented; at the same time he caused the obstinate to fear him. The priests believed that if the government should change at such a critical time great injuries would result to the kingdom.⁸⁷

The bishop of Puebla attributed the victories of the royal armies to the fortunate arrival of Venegas, because conditions were so very critical before he came to Mexico and it had looked as if everything acquired in almost three centuries would be lost. He said that the new viceroy entered a kingdom entirely unknown to him full of disorder, deprived of an army, arms, and all the necessary things with which to check the insurgents; but such obstacles, which perhaps would have embarrassed other chiefs, could not intimidate him or check his wise and energetic measures. In spite of almost invincible obstacles, he organized a fairly efficient army, created juntas to administer justice, issued proclamations to make the people see the injustice of the insurrection, and urged prelates to use their influence to help

⁸⁷El venerable cuerpo de curas de Mexico hace presentes los justos motivos que ocurren para que se continúe al actual virrey en el gobierno de esta N. E. Mexico, May 11, 1811, AGI, 1898 (92-5-6). Audiencia de Méjico.

combat the revolution.⁵⁸ The criminal chamber of the audiencia praised the services of the viceroy in checking the insurrection against the mother country, and avowed that every day respect for him increased, that God would bless all his undertakings, and that all the efforts of the rebels would be useless while he remained in command. It said that the insurgents greatly desired his removal, the lies about him were not true, and that it would be a big risk to change the executive at that time.⁵⁹

Meanwhile the freedom of the press came which, although it was not put into effect immediately in America, according to Queipo, excited sufficiently the imprudence of the insurgents and gave a motive to the Mexican deputies in the extraordinary Cortes to lie about and depose Venegas. The Spanish Constitution of 1812 established freedom of printing and at once a multitude of malicious and defamatory libels of the government, the legitimate authorities, the soldiers, and of all good men were made public.⁶⁰ Conditions seemed to be quieting down somewhat in Mexico, therefore Venegas stated that the press should be free, although the audiencia, the metropolitan chapter, the bishops, except the bishop of Oaxaca, and many other important personages thought that he made a great mistake.⁶¹ The viceroy asked Queipo's opinion concerning the freedom of the press and the bishop argued that in time of insurrection it should not be put into effect, since it would be impracticable for the pacification of the kingdom; in time of revolt it was often necessary to suspend laws which protected individual liberty. The ecclesiastic could not conceive anything so absurd as the Cortes giving such a law to insurgents, for it would only make the war more fierce

⁵⁸Manuel Ignacio, obispo de Puebla á la regencia. Puebla, May 11, 1811, AGI, 1898 (92-5-6). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁵⁹La sala del crimen de Mexico, avisa á V. M. del nuevo peligro que amenaza a éste reyno, y que en su concepto es mayor del que se ha corrido hasta ahora. Mexico, May 29, 1811, AGI, 1898 (92-5-6). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁶⁰Representación a S. M. en 20 de Junio de 1815 . . . sobre la situación política de nuestras Americas. G.

⁶¹Callcott, 33-34.

and cruel. He said that the American deputies who helped make the law were largely rebels or secret agents of independence in the colonies and no doubt they had influenced the Cortes to pass it.⁶² Venegas soon realized his error and decided to suspend the law owing to the unfavorable circumstances in Mexico. He said that the love of independence of the natives was so general that when the press was unshackled seditious writings appeared which only excited the people to rebellion. The plan to form a national junta in Mexico and the disorders of the country hastened the measure to suspend temporarily the freedom of the press which was considered the chief instrument of the seditious fermentation. Venegas also asserted that it was hardly possible to preserve the kingdom without the suspension of the Spanish Constitution. Some of the members of the Council of State thought that the viceroy was an old-timer and should not have suspended the important provision. They said that there were men who always clung to the old and always considered the new dangerous, who hurled curses against it and attributed to it all unfortunate events, giving them more weight than necessary; influenced by their own opinions and love of the old system, they did not examine the causes which affected events or were the origin of them, but simply believed that such occurrences were the result of the new order of things, and perhaps the suppression of the freedom of printing was due to this. The Council believed that in Mexico there was danger of emphasizing the disastrous conditions too much on account of fear, and for that reason the seditious writings were dreaded too much. The Council however considered it dangerous to revoke the viceroy's measure without any other information, and a just opinion could not be formed about his conduct.⁶³ Naturally, after the people had experienced freedom of the press, when it was abolished, they became more dissatisfied than ever.

⁶²Representación a S. M. en 20 de Junio de 1815 . . . sobre la situación política de nuestras Americas. G.

⁶³Consulta del consejo de estado. Cádiz, June 2, 1813, num. 9, AGI, 1822 (92-1-8). Audiencia de Méjico.

José María Froncoso, a lawyer of the audiencia, and López Bueno, captain of the first battalion of the regiment of infantry in Vera Cruz, were very much disgusted because they were not permitted to publish a harmless almanac which they had prepared for the people. When they saw that their efforts were laughed at, they insisted upon the observance of the regulation for freedom of the press which had been suppressed. Much patriotic literature continued to be printed in violation of the viceroy's measure.⁶⁴

The opinions demanding the removal of Venegas spread more and more, the difficulties of the government increased, the insurgents grew bolder, and the praises of Calleja resounded. Finally in 1813 General Félix María Calleja began to govern New Spain. He had commenced his military career at sixteen years of age and served with distinction in the army of the peninsula under the conde de O'Reilly. From 1784 to 1789 he directed the cadets of the army and united them into companies of which he was the captain in the military college of Puerto de Santa María. In 1789 he came to Mexico with Viceroy Revillagigedo and since that time was continually employed in the colony. As a general he had rendered very great services to the country, in spite of the fact that he was fond of his own opinions and liked flattery. He visited the provinces of Colotlan and Nayarit almost unknown, put them in order and security, and then caused maps to be made of them; he inspected and organized the militias of Nueva Galicia; he defended the Provincias Internas of Nuevo León and Nuevo Santander and regulated their provincial companies; he formed the first division of the north, regulated the brigade of San Luis Potosí, which was a credit to the government during the revolution; in 1800 he inspected the veteran troops which garrisoned the fortress of Perote, the stronghold of Vera Cruz, and its coasts; and he was intrusted by the royal acuerdo with the security and peace of

⁶⁴José María Froncoso á la regencia. Vera Cruz, Jan. 25, 1813, AGI, 1897 (92-5-5). Audiencia de Méjico.

the capital after the deposition of Iturrigaray.⁶⁵ When the insurrection began he filled up the ranks of the troops with new recruits, raised various bodies of Spanish patriots to defend the towns, and freed the troops of his command from the contagion of revolt to which they had been exposed by secret revolutionary agents. With those forces he won the battles of Aculco, Guanajuato, Calderón, Citácuaro, Cuautla, and others; but he was intoxicated by victory and did not follow up his victories or know how to profit by them, since he worked slowly, allowing his enemies to increase their numbers and improve their defenses. In the battles of Citácuaro and Cuautla he lost much of his military reputation, and that of the insurgents increased; he gave the first bad example of untruth, making Viceroy Venegas believe that the insurrection was extinguished when it was really in its prime, and it was said that he was not blameless in the plots against Venegas. Abad Queipo said that as a viceroy he did not deserve any eulogy; the bishop believed that he could have suppressed the revolution in 1813, 1814, and also in 1815 if he had tried harder and the policy of the government had not been so unprogressive.

The administration, according to Queipo's opinion, should have made a thorough study of the military situation in Mexico and on that knowledge the system of war should have been based. He represented to Viceroy Calleja the need of this and at the same time pointed out to him the errors committed in the direction of the war and the bad financial policy which despoiled the treasury.⁶⁶ Calleja did not thank the bishop for his advice; he told the attorney-general that Queipo was not content to exercise his ecclesiastical functions, but decided to take part in gubernatorial and military matters, believing that he was able to do it

⁶⁵México en su ayuntamiento expone á V. M. algunos de los singulares méritos de su actual virey Don Félix María Calleja. . . . Mexico, April 5, 1816, AGI, 1904 (92-5-12). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁶⁶Representación a S. M. en 20 de Junio de 1815 . . . sobre la situación política de nuestras Americas. G.

and had the right to be heard like an oracle in affairs absolutely foreign to his profession.⁶⁷

Under the unenlightened financial policy the entire expenses of the government fell upon the towns garrisoned by the royal troops; most of them had been sacked, and in all of them their industry and agriculture was ruined for eight or ten leagues around them. The expenses of the administration rose to 16,000,000 pesos annually and in 1815 to 18,000,000 pesos, when the total amount produced by the treasury was only 7,000,000 pesos a year; in 1815 it fell short 2,000,000 pesos from the tobacco revenue because the crop was abandoned. Since all that was needed to meet the war costs was obtained from the garrisoned towns, from gifts, and forced loans, many people were bankrupt and were forced to emigrate, as happened in Valladolid, which before the revolution had 25,000 inhabitants and in 1815 only 3800. That city suffered the most from the beginning and its agriculture disappeared in 1813 on account of the indolence of the commanders, yet it was the city that made the greatest sacrifices.⁶⁸

Calleja also kept the measure for freedom of the press suspended, since he thought it would only cause more disorders and aid the insurrection; but he was very careful to state that it was merely temporary while the disturbances lasted.⁶⁹ The viceroy and the audiencia were both very much opposed to the Spanish Constitution of 1812 which had been ordered put into effect in Mexico. The audiencia declared that New Spain was moving rapidly toward dissolution because of the scandalous and irremediable abuse of the laws. It said that some of the articles of the Spanish Constitution had not been put into effect and others were executed with such illegality and excess that it was necessary to suspend them; the law for freedom of the

⁶⁷Félix María Calleja al ministro de gracia y justicia. Mexico, Oct. 31, 1814, num. 27 reservada, AGI, 2568 (96-4-23). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁶⁸Queipo, Representación a S. M. en 20 de Junio de 1815 . . . sobre la situación política de nuestras Americas. G.

⁶⁹Félix Calleja al Exmo. Sr. ministro de gracia y justicia. Mexico, Oct. 5, 1813, num. 13 reservada, AGI, 1897 (92-5-5). Audiencia de Méjico.

press only lasted two months since it could not be observed without overthrowing the state; neither could the articles relative to elections of ayuntamientos, deputies to the Cortes, and individuals of the provincial deputations be carried out in the existing critical circumstances without the ruin of the country. The audiencia thought that what was provided for the protection of civil liberty and property, and many other articles of the Constitution could not be enforced; therefore it would have been better if the king had tried to find out the true state of affairs in Mexico rather than to extend to it a constitution that could not be observed.⁷⁰ The members of the criminal chamber of the audiencia gave account to the king concerning the great disorders which the constitution and the law for the regulation of the tribunals caused in the country. Because of the increase in crime against lives and property, they asked that its old power should be restored to the sala in order to exterminate crimes.⁷¹

Many times Calleja had asked the regency to adopt another system of government and suspend the Constitution of 1812 lest the overseas possessions be lost, but his petitions had not been answered; consequently he greatly rejoiced when he heard that Ferdinand VII had annulled the hated document issued by the general Cortes. He immediately took measures to suppress it in the capital and commanded this to be done in the other parts of the kingdom. He felt that nothing was more favorable to the ideas of the revolutionists than the Constitution, because under it the factions were in continual relation and agreement with their deputies in the peninsula who worked for them, and the freedom of the press caused much trouble. The viceroy maintained that in the election of deputies to the Cortes persons affiliated with the patriotic party and the secret

⁷⁰La audiencia de Mexico informa á V. M. el infelecesimo estado de las cosas políticas en Nueva España. . . Mexico, Nov. 18, 1813, AGI (136-7-9). Indiferente General de Nueva España.

⁷¹Tomás Moyano al Señor presidente del consejo de Indias. Palacio, Jan. 11, 1816, AGI, 1829 (92-1-15). Audiencia de Méjico.

society of Guadalupe were chosen and that they had constant relations with the rebels and Morelos to whom they gave account of all that the executive did against them. He declared that among the Americans there reigned a kind of Freemasonry which made them secure from all investigation when treating matters of independence. They were all united and worked for the same end, but were never discovered. Europeans who could have testified to their acts many times did not do it because of fear; they knew that their testimony would be useless since the Americans were not punished, and it would only have made more enemies for themselves. There was thus lack of investigation of public matters and a repeated compromise by the government, which at times did not dare to take a measure even when it saw the most criminal acts and heard the clamor of good citizens for the conviction of the guilty. Although the Europeans were stronger in the capital, the deputies selected were José María Alcalá, full canon of the metropolitan church, the regidor, Ignacio Adalid, the honorary judge of the audiencia, Fagoaga, Manuel Cartázar, and Félix López de Vargara, all of whom belonged to the Guadalupe Society. Adalid, Fagoaga, and López were tried for conspiracy, therefore the viceroy did not permit them to go to the peninsula, but Alcalá and Cartázar went. The deputies thus chosen kept up from Cádiz frequent communication with the Mexican insurgents and used their role as legislators in favor of them; hence the constitution which they helped to make was utilized by the rebels. Except in the capital, the same thing happened in the election of the members of the constitutional ayuntamientos, since no European or American approved by the nation, men of wealth, or known talents were chosen; persons from obscure places and even those suspected of disloyalty were preferred to them. The separatist element was gleeful on account of this and held demonstrations in favor of the insurrection. Germán Latorre, a recent writer on Mexican independence, said that it was only due to the calmness of the viceroy that those men connected with the secret so-

cieties and the ayuntamiento did not obtain possession of the capital. Under the Constitution there was doubt about the relationship of the provincial deputations to the viceroy; some, like Yucatan, wished to free themselves from the common center of authority, open the ports to foreign commerce, and reduce the power of the executive to that of a simple military chief. The deputation of Monterrey disobeyed the viceroy's command and did not give aid to the commandant-general, Arredondo, consequently Calleja had to dissolve it. Latorre likewise asserted that the viceroy's hands were tied because the acuerdo was not always with him, almost the total mass of the indigenous population, also the members of the ayuntamientos and provincial juntas which had their representatives in the Cortes were against him; he could only count on the faithful Spanish minority. After publishing the proclamations which stated that the Constitution had been annulled, Calleja admitted that the rebels threw off their mask and denied obedience to the king, thus they showed that their former conduct, by which they pretended to support Ferdinand VII, was merely hypocrisy.⁷²

On the other hand the National Academy of Jurisprudence gave thanks for the liberal Spanish Constitution. It praised the king as an example of wisdom and the defender of liberty, and declared that it was good for Spain to be organized according to liberal ideas; the Cortes was lauded as the fountain of the good which was already enjoyed. It was said that Mexico had received the Constitution dictated by the monarch as a gift sent from heaven to restore it to its ancient rank and splendor. The Academy maintained that the document represented the most precious principles of the public right, of justice, and equity, also that it abounded in useful maxims to preserve national liberty,

⁷²Félix María Calleja al Exmo. Sr. ministro de gracia y justicia. Mexico, Aug. 18, 1814, num. 24 reservada, AGI, 136-7-9. Indiferente General; Calleja al Exmo. Señor ministro de ultramar. Mexico, Oct. 31, 1814, num. 16 reservada, *ibid.*; Germán Latorre, "Seperación del virreinato de Nueva España de la metrópoli." *Revista de archivos, bibliotecas y museos*. Sept.-Dec. 1914, pp. 212-215.

peace, and prosperity. It believed that the happiness over the constitution was universal among all the organizations of the state and that it destroyed the bad impressions which the sentences of the Inquisition had caused.⁷³

Calleja encountered many obstacles in administration and in his efforts to check the insurrection. He said that means of recruiting soldiers were useless among people who abhorred the armies of the government, conscription was inefficient because of the disorder of the people and the conduct of the constitutional ayuntamientos, and the levy only served to increase the regiments temporarily, afterwards swelling the ranks of the enemy by deserters going over to the rebels with their supply of armament and ammunition. He avowed that six million inhabitants decided upon independence did not need to be agreed or united; each one worked for the project according to his possibility and means, the judge and his subalterns covered up and dissimulated crimes, ecclesiastics persuaded the people of the justice of the insurrection through the confessional and frequently in the pulpit, writers corrupted public opinion, women tried to seduce the government troops and get them to go over to the enemy, the employed disregarded the measures of their superiors, the young took up arms, the aged spread news and carried mail, the wealthy rendered financial aid, the learned gave advice and direction, the corporations abetted the division of the realm and would not admit Europeans, the treasury could not have been in a worse condition, and the ports had to be closed to all foreign commerce except that of Spain.⁷⁴

The executive had trouble with the bishop of Puebla, Antonio Joaquín Pérez, whose conduct was declared unbecoming to his high office and his ideas were said to be

⁷³Solemn acci3n de gracias que la academia de jurisprudencia teorico-practica nacional, y publica de la capital de Mexico da al supremo congreso de las Cortes generales extraordinarias por haver dictado la constituci3n pol3tica de la monarqu3a Espa3ola celebrada el d3a 15 de Marzo de 1813. AGI, 1901 (92-5-9). Audiencia de M3jico.

⁷⁴Germán Latorre, "Seperaci3n del virreinato de Nueva Espa3a de la metrópoli." *Revista de archivos, bibliotecas y museos*. Sept.-Dec. 1914, p. 217.

similar to those of the rebel factions. On the other hand, the prelate complained of the disorders caused by punishment inflicted upon innocent individuals and of the high contributions they had to make, yet they were expected to keep quiet about all evils, for it was useless to appeal to the tribunals. He said that the tithes of the church were used by the government, but Calleja retorted that they were the only means for the subsistence of the troops and cavalry, and no more religious funds were employed than necessary; if the church lost them it gained in security, at any rate the revolutionists took more than the royalists. The bishop was not satisfied with the means of pardon adopted for repentant revolutionists and informed the viceroy that some of the insignificant chiefs were trying to interpose his mediation to solicit pardon for their actions. The executive wrote to him saying that if the measures provided in the latest proclamation of December 22, did not seem ample to bring back the rebels, he should make known other better methods. Neither the Europeans nor the creoles were contented with the government and they both declaimed against its abuses and imprudent policy.⁷⁵

That Calleja did not know how to command respect and obedience was one of the faults which Abad Queipo found with him. The bishop said he was under the influence of the favorite Villamil, military discipline was relaxed, there was disagreement in the operations of war, and many commanders were insolent; with 80,000 men under arms he was only able to keep the towns garrisoned by the troops. All the others were lost and the insurgents with 25,000 or 30,000 inefficient troops without discipline and many of them without arms were the true sovereigns of the country. On account of this they disposed of agriculture, industry, commerce, controlled the roads, destroyed everything outside of the fortifications held by the government forces, and

⁷⁵Calleja al ministro de gracia y justicia. Mexico, June 12, 1816. Acompaña un quaderno de contestaciones que ha tenido con el obispo de Puebla D. Antonio Joaquín Pérez . . . num. 3 reservada, AGI, 90-2-1. Audiencia de Méjico. BL.

imposed shameful contributions on whatever merchandise was conducted without guards to the fortified towns and the capital. No estate could be kept under cultivation unless it was guarded with a troop of soldiers or if dues were not paid to the rebels. Queipo did not think much of the administration of Calleja, for he declared that only a wise and energetic government maintained by chiefs of much probity, of great talent, and of firm character could pacify the country. Again the bishop entreated the king to appoint a notable and honest viceroy who would not come to New Spain to enrich himself, but who would have very superior military and political talents, and high character. He thought that this executive should enjoy extensive powers while the insurrection lasted and until there was a general pacification; he ought also, during the war, to have authority over the captains-general of the Provincias Internas and the president of the audiencia of Guadalajara in order that they might cooperate with him and aid him. He should be authorized to send to Spain persons who were suspected of indifference, men and women of any social class, and they should not be permitted to return to America until four years after the provinces should be pacified since the general welfare of the country demanded this.⁷⁰

On the other hand, in 1816 Calleja gave a glowing account of what he had done for the country. He said that the interior of Mexico was peaceful, crimes were rare, subsistence was abundant and at favorable prices, there was an active traffic of products even in the most distant provinces, public opinion was improved and minds were reconciled, agriculture had increased, many insurgents had hastened to secure pardon, the inhabitants had returned to their homes and occupations, the rebel groups formed on the frontiers of Texas were scattered, and the Indian hostilities in eastern Texas were almost over, owing to the exploits of the commandant, Arredondo. Only some scat-

⁷⁰Representación a S. M. en 20 de Junio de 1815 . . . sobre la situación política de nuestras Americas. G.

tered bands of rebels remained who in the shadows of night committed their evil deeds."⁷⁷

The ayuntamiento of Mexico was very profuse in its praises of Viceroy Calleja. It maintained that he had sufficient training and that, though former executives had left him the hardest and most confidential commissions to perform, yet he had contributed much to the security of the kingdom in past years. In the three years of his administration he had almost been forced to create new provinces and give them agriculture, industry, and commerce; he had had to form plans for defense and security, and seemed to have been endowed with greatness for the task. He had decided to die for the king and to save the country, and the city council said that without his activity the crown might have lost its jewel America. He gave the rebellion mortal blows from which it could not recover and the entire nation put its hope in him as the most capable soldier. The ayuntamiento declared that in spite of the greatest obstacles the viceroy had freed the provinces of Oaxaca, Michoacán, Texas, taken the occupied points of Mexico, Puebla, and Acapulco from the rebels, the roads were made passable, products circulated from one district to another, comestibles became cheaper, and agriculture and mining improved. Calleja looked out for every department of government, and the people regarded him as a liberator.⁷⁸

Administration in America was also handicapped by mistaken policies and political intrigues in Spain where the Mexican insurgents had their agents. Abad Queipo maintained that the revolutionists knew how to influence the Cortes and keep the truth about important matters from going to the king; that was how it happened that the sovereign adopted the error of the Cortes which placed the min-

⁷⁷Calleja al ministro de gracia. Tacubaya, May 30, 1816. Acompañando copia de lo que escribe al ministerio de la guerra, manifiesta estado del reyno. Num. 6 reservada, papeleta 81, AGI, 90-2-1. Audiencia de Méjico. BL.

⁷⁸Méjico en su ayuntamiento expone á V. M. algunos de los singulares méritos de su actual virey Dn. Félix Calleja . . . Mexico, April 5, 1816, AGI, 1904 (92-5-12). Audiencia de Méjico.

istry of the overseas government in the hands of Americans—an act repugnant to sane policy, to the supreme law of the preservation of the monarchy; an event which had no parallel in the history of other nations and which would have been considered with horror by the predecessors of the present monarch. The bishop said that this mistake had been checked somewhat by the dependence of the Council of State and the responsibility of the ministry, but the universal ministry of the Indies did not have any counterbalance; it had as much latitude as the great José de Gálvez, a man of extraordinary powers and abilities, had given it. The Americans were safe in his hands, but in other hands they were in great danger, hence the ministry of the Indies should not be intrusted to the most worthy and extraordinary American, because this might create an occasion to compromise the security of the state and prepare the separation of those vast possessions, especially when examples of insurrection existed.

Miguel Lardizábal, the minister of the Indies, was no favorite of Queipo and naturally he was a very different kind of man from the galvanic José de Gálvez. The prelate declared that his doctrine and conduct inspired little confidence in any good Spaniard who examined them carefully. He intimated that the minister had friendly relations with the insurgents, for he asked that an American be placed on the regency. Queipo did not know whether the rebels consulted with him and assured him that they were all ready to commit the crime of rebellion if a right which they never had before was not granted them, or whether he was the chief or one of the principal agents of the great franc-masonic coalition of insurgents who promoted the independence of the Americas with boldness and energy. He thought that this was probable, since the society entitled "*Racionales Caballeros*," which embraced the formulas and merits of the Freemasons and established lodges in different provinces of Europe and America, was very influential, and worked without ceasing for the independence of America. In the lodge of the Barrio de San Carlos of Cádiz, in which

they initiated Vicente Acuña, more than sixty individuals were present. Acuña was sent there and was authorized by a faction as the apostle of the insurrection of New Spain to make proselytes and propagate the sect, as he did, establishing lodges in Vera Cruz, Xalapa, and Mexico City.

The insurgents of Citácuaro transcribed in their pamphlets a clause of the writings of Lardizábal which said, "Can Señor Lardizábal speak to us more clearly? Does he not say to us that we shall remain firm in our project because finally we must prevail since Spain is lost and must succumb to the French?" Queipo considered this an ambiguity which gave support and encouragement to the revolutionists in America and was not excusable in the writings of the minister; whatever may have been the merit of Lardizábal's manifesto of August 12, 1811, about sovereignty, it was certain that the purpose of publishing it and scattering copies in all the Americas was a seditious and criminal one. Lardizábal, the bishop said, printed in his two proclamations to the Americans of May 24 and July 20, 1814, seditious and mistaken doctrines ruinous to all society. In the first he expressed doubt whether the insurgents of America had or did not have legitimate reason to rebel and whether the wise part of the people—the Europeans and Americans—who resisted were criminals or benefactors in that resistance. In the second one he declared that a province which had been wronged had the right to ask satisfaction or take its own part; by virtue of this idea, if the minister had been a deputy from New Spain, he would have demanded satisfaction of the Cortes. Queipo asserted that according to this doctrine any province of a society was by itself independent and enjoyed the rights of an independent nation in its relations with the metropolis; if Extremadura, for example, felt aggrieved by New Castile or by the king who commanded and governed all the provinces of the monarchy, it could ask satisfaction of the sovereign and, if he decided that it was not aggrieved, could separate from the monarchy, join itself to Portugal or declare itself inde-

pendent. The other provinces which composed the nation could do the same thing.

That the minister elevated to the highest offices subjects suspected of unfaithfulness was another fault which Queipo found with him. He said that Lardizábal hid from the king the true situation of the Americas and the danger which existed in New Spain; when the expedition of General Murillo went out to South America, the minister already knew about the loss of Montevideo and in such a case the true interests of the monarchy demanded that it should have come to aid Mexico because that colony alone was more important than Venezuela, Caracas, Buenos Aires, and all the other overseas provinces together. Besides, the pacification of Mexico would influence that of the other revolted provinces. The confessor of the king was an American, a man without opinion, enlightenment, or talent, as was well known. Queipo said that it would not have been difficult to find in the peninsula one hundred more worthy confessors than Don Blas Oltalaza and a dozen subjects more capable to discharge the duties of the universal minister of the Indies than Miguel Lardizábal.

The remedies for the critical situation suggested by Queipo were first to put the universal ministry of the Indies under the charge of a Spaniard of the peninsula whose ideas would not be in contradiction with his duties, and not to permit that minister to have more powers in his branch of administration than the other ministers had in theirs; thus the errors would be few and all the burdens would fall upon the councils and the glory would remain with the sovereign. Second a military force of 10,000 or 12,000 well-instructed and dependable men should be sent to Mexico for its defense and at the same time a military viceroy of much honor and superior talent should be appointed. Third the Council of War should draw up military instructions from the recent data which existed in the secretariats and from what the bishop of Michoacán had sent to Spain to meet the special circumstances in America. The king should form a reglamento for the government of the mon-

archy which would include the Americas, for it was utterly impossible for any nation to prosper without a constant system of government. The ministers and principal agents of the administration did not wish such a system because their arbitrariness would be suppressed, but the true interests of the crown and the people needed it very badly. Finally the sovereign should make a law which would declare that the first obligation of the supreme councils consisted in explaining to the royal person whatever serious matters they had knowledge of in the government, and with that law a fitting constitution should be given to the Spanish nation. Queipo believed that justice and wisdom in the laws and in contributions, also a sufficient restraint from the capriciousness of ministers were the solid bases of all good governments and the monarch would be covered with immortal glory if they were actually attained.⁷⁰

Juan Ruiz de Apodaca, the count of Venadito, replaced Calleja as viceroy in 1816, but he was not any more successful in the pacification of Mexico than his predecessor. Conditions were critical when he arrived in the colony, for the rebels still held sixteen posts in the province of Vera Cruz, six on the eastern coast, and ten in the interior, more or less distant from the coasts; from those posts they dominated all the province of Vera Cruz. They intercepted all the principal roads and imposed contributions on the muleteers or robbed and killed them if they resisted; nobody went in and out of Vera Cruz without paying them something; thus they had abundant provisions for their troops and they communicated with foreigners, from whom they received arms, ammunition, and other aid. The new executive caused the enemy posts to be taken at the cost of much bloodshed. The intendancy of Mexico was then peaceful except the region of Temescaltepec, however in the intendancy of Michoacán the insurgents held everything except Valladolid, Zamora, and La Piedad, which the national forces possessed. Disturbances still occurred along the

⁷⁰Representación a S. M. en 20 de Junio de 1815 . . . sobre la situación política de nuestras Americas. G.

Pacific, notwithstanding that many of the principal leaders of the beginning of the insurrection had been killed. The French and American adventurers continued to cause trouble along the northern frontiers and to furnish the Indians with arms and munitions which they taught them to use.⁸⁰ A certain Pedro Gómora said that, although the viceroy declared he had fought the enemies, he took no measures to pursue them and the conduct of the commanders could be improved. According to Gómora other conditions had not been bettered; there were various complaints against the government because of the heavy dues imposed and its lack of energy in correcting the disorders of the commandants. Silver and gold were exported from San Blas and Altamira without paying the royal dues.⁸¹ General Iturbide, who had helped the viceroy against the insurrection and who at first worked efficiently in favor of the royal cause, became ungrateful, started a new rebellion, and adopted the cause of the insurgents. Apodaca was much surprised; he took measures so that the capital would not be endangered by Iturbide, issued a proclamation against him on March 3, 1821, and ordered the faithful generals to support the government.⁸²

Writings which criticized the policies of the government could not be prevented. A paper entitled "Defense of the Jesuit Fathers by the People" boldly declaimed against the Cortes for extinguishing the order; at the time of its suppression some resistance arose in the provinces of Guanajuato, Puebla, and other towns, but the viceroy believed the danger was past and that the Jesuits had not influenced the publication.⁸³ The ayuntamiento of Mexico City lauded

⁸⁰El conde de Venadito al secretario de estado y del despacho de la gobernación de ultramar. Manifiesta el verdadero estado en que se halla la pasificación de aquel reyno. . . Mexico, Jan. 8, 1821, AGI, 1680 (91-2-14). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁸¹Consulta del consejo de Indias á 26 de Febrero de 1817. AGI, 1147 (88-1-10). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁸²El conde de Venadito al ministro de ultramar. Mexico, March 7, 1821, num. 187 reservada, AGI, 1680 (91-2-14). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁸³El conde de Venadito al ministro de la gobernación de ultramar. Mexico, Dec. 13, 1820, num. 107, AGI, 1677 (91-2-11). Audiencia de Méjico.

Apodaca in spite of the fact that he was rather a colorless executive. It declared that he had distinguished himself in diplomatic and military careers and for his loyalty to the king, and that Mexico received great benefits from his administration. Religion flourished, his military measures were just and wise, he severely avenged the enemies of the state, in the administration of justice complaints disappeared, the funds of the treasury were increased and with the improvement of the treasury public credit was strengthened each day; he even tried to feed the miserable people, he desired that children of both sexes should be taught to read, he greatly desired peace, and the people loved him because he cared for the happiness of all. The ayuntamiento ended by saying that it could not exaggerate his good qualities.⁸⁴

Conditions changed again in 1820 when the Spanish Constitution of 1812 was reestablished. Germán Latorre declared that it hastened the loss of the reconquered viceroyalty because the scenes of the first constitutional epoch were repeated, with freedom of the press, election of deputies to the Cortes, and the selection of members of ayuntamientos and provincial juntas. At first Viceroy Apodaca did not wish to give credence to the triumph of the Constitution in Spain; when the first news was brought to him he answered that he had not received a royal order. Later when he was told that an oath had been taken to the Constitution in Coruña and Havana he said that all classes of the state were faithful to the king and New Spain did not desire to have any innovation; consequently the viceroy was very much disgusted when the news spread. When he was certain that a change had been made in the government an oath was nevertheless taken to the new régime in all the colony and he began to put its provisions into effect. When the oath was taken to the Constitution in Mérida de Yucatan an independent constitutional government was organized, for the idea of independence was more or less mixed

⁸⁴El ayuntamiento de Mexico expone á V. M. los meritos y servicios del teniente general Don Juan Ruiz de Apodaca. . . Mexico, June 16, 1820, AGI, 1678 (91-2-12). Audiencia de Méjico.

with the Constitution. The general overthrow of the administration in Mexico came in July 1820 and Apodaca asked to be relieved of his office on account of breaking health and to return to Spain.⁸⁵

A supreme effort was made by the Cortes to reform the political system in Mexico when Juan O'Donojú was sent as viceroy armed with very detailed instructions, which would have been impossible for a superman to carry out in time of peace. The constitution of the Spanish monarchy and the decrees of the Cortes were to be observed; the people were to take an oath to the constitution; and constitutional ayuntamientos were to be appointed in all towns having one thousand inhabitants. Provincial deputations were to be provided, but they might not have more than ninety sessions a year and those meetings were not to be public, since they were not deliberative bodies and their sessions might be suspended by the viceroy for misconduct; the election of deputies was to be according to the prescribed number and the exact census and the opinion of the deputies was to be heard in economic matters. Only gatherings and societies provided for by the constitution might be held; constitutional government was to be organized in all the provinces without delay and enforced in such a way that no complaints might arise; nobody was to enjoy a salary without occupation; all persons chosen for political offices were to be efficient and there was to be alternation between Americans and Europeans; the employment of natives who lived in the province should be avoided. The viceroy was to make his authority respected and obeyed; the bloody strife between Europeans and Americans was to be extinguished if possible and tranquility restored; the opinions of the executive should always be impartial and should not favor any party. The permitted organizations were to be directed by the viceroy or capable chiefs of the districts in order that they might cooperate with the government to keep order and to observe the constitution; a police force of peace-loving men

⁸⁵"Separación del virreinato de Nueva España de la metrópoli." *Revista de archivos, bibliotecas y museos*. Sept.-Dec. 1914, pp. 225, 231-232.

should be organized; the ayuntamiento was to be persuaded to appoint sensible, honorable, and peaceful individuals to censor books in order to suppress the abuses of printing; all means were to be employed to correct public disorders, obscene language, drunkenness, injurious games, and any acts which offended morality and religion; the people were to be civilized by good and instructive means and innocent diversions might be permitted. The Indians were to be taught Spanish, the manner of living, the dress of the Spaniards, and marriage with the peninsulars was to be encouraged; the natives were not to be kept isolated in towns any longer, but their civilization and health were to occupy the attention of all officials. National militias were to be established and arms distributed for the security of the country; virtue and merit were to be duly recompensed; the viceroy was to propose means which he considered fitting for the happiness of the people; the laws and constitution were to be exactly obeyed and any breaking of them was to be reported immediately to the superior government; rewards, offices, and honors were to be offered to the principal revolutionary chiefs if they observed tranquility and all conciliatory means were to be employed to prevent bloodshed. The community funds of towns and Indian municipalities were to be investigated so that accounts might be rendered punctually and annual financial reports were to be presented by the provincial deputations and ayuntamientos for the viceroy's approval; a census was to be taken; the political divisions of the country were to be made according to the constitution and they had to be uniform; communication was to be improved by construction of roads, bridges, and canals. Municipal juntas of sanitation were to be formed in all the towns to provide for the health of the people and to prevent the spread of contagious diseases; vaccination was to be encouraged and statistics of it kept; the rules for cemeteries were to be enforced; reports were to be made relative to houses of refuge, hospitals, prisons, and institutions of charity so that they might be better administered. The provincial deputations were to make sta-

tistics and a census of the missions, specifying their lands and possessions and means for their improvement; public instruction was to be promoted; all legal and moral obstacles which hindered the advancement of agriculture should be removed and the use of new beneficial plants encouraged; commerce was to be promoted and ports established. The provinces ruined by the insurrection were to be restored by distributing the population more equally, and founding new towns in depopulated sections, on principal roads, and in sanitary places; and Texas and the Floridas were to be protected and fortified against the aggressions of the United States. These were some of the many things that the last Mexican viceroy, a weak mortal, was expected to do in a country ravaged by revolution for so many years, in other words he was to overcome all the defects of the colonial system.⁸⁶ Even this supreme effort to administer Mexico did not provide for complete self-government by the people and if it could have been put into effect it would not likely have been any more successful than the former régime.

When O'Donojú arrived in Mexico he reported to the Secretary of State that most of the people wanted independence. He said that a thousand ideas came to him to remedy the situation but he could not decide upon any, since the obstacles were insurmountable; there were no troops, no money, no provisions, there was lack of correspondence with the interior, and no means of uniting the colony with Spain. The new viceroy did write to the captain-general of Cuba to send him an army, which never came. Finally, believing that all was lost without remedy, he signed an agreement with Iturbide at Córdoba, and hoped that the king would approve of it. He declared that independence was won already and there was no force in the world to check it; therefore it was necessary to recognize Mexico as a sovereign and independent nation. He stated that a constitutional monarchy was best for a country, that the

⁸⁶Gobernación de ultramar al Señor Don Juan O'Donojú. Madrid, March 2, 1821, AGI, 1676 (91-2-10). Audiencia de Méjico.

people loved a monarch whom they chose better than any other executive, and it was fitting for the glory of Spain that one of its princes should be emperor of Mexico. Ferdinand VII was the first one named in article three of the agreement of Córdoba, then his brothers and cousins according to their age. O'Donojú begged the king to accept the Treaty of Córdoba as the only thing that could have been done under the critical conditions in Mexico.⁸⁷ The unfortunate O'Donojú did not live to know what the royal pleasure might be because he died shortly afterwards before he could return to Spain.

The preceding account shows that from the very first the Spanish administration of Mexican affairs had serious defects; all the abuses of sovereign power of which the English colonists in Virginia and Massachusetts complained were duplicated. To them were added many others; the admirable laws of the Indies were violated and not enforced, the cumbersomeness of colonial administration increased more and more, the viceroys were greatly overworked, the corruption of minor officials was scandalous, and even viceroys deliberately planned to return to the peninsula rich after a brief term of service, a thing not considered amiss. Indeed, the viceroyalty was much sought as a means of recouping the fortunes of decayed aristocracy. It was impossible to wring any great political innovations from the reluctant hands of Spain until the reign of the celebrated Charles III when the intendant system was inaugurated, which was expected to produce many reforms and correct the most conspicuous abuses of the colonial system. The division of the ministry of the Indies at the death of the exalted José de Gálvez affected the colonies very much and not always for the best. The Bourbon reforms came late, not before the abuses and outrageous corruption became customary and a thing to be expected, therefore many of them were only temporary and lost much of their

⁸⁷Juan O'Donojú al secretario de estado y del despacho de la gobernación. Córdoba, July 31, 1821, and Aug. 31, 1821, num. 4, AGI, 1680 (91-2-14). Audiencia de Méjico.

effectiveness. There was scathing criticism of the intendant system, the new officials were not a great improvement over the old ones, and soon the non-observance of the code became quite general. Finally dissatisfaction with the new administrative system, because of defects, violations, unworkable parts, and annulments, grew so pronounced that in 1802 there was another attempt at reform. An entirely new Ordinance of Intendants was drawn up for all the colonies, but it was not satisfactory and was never put into effect.

By the nineteenth century the whole judicial system of New Spain atrophied and lost its early vigor; there was a general relaxation in efficiency from the famous *La Acordada* to the supreme court of the *audiencia* and all efforts to reform the judiciary were futile. A scarcity of *audiencias* existed in such a vast territory and as a result delay was the rule because of the increased business of those high tribunals; yet it was considered unadvisable to establish more of them. Public-spirited individuals did try to better conditions in Mexico, but their petitions and the *expedientes* which they formed were frequently tabled and nothing came of them.

The viceroys of the nineteenth century were certainly not an improvement over former executives. The people did not want to receive Marquina, who they thought was only another tool of the hated Godoy, and the conduct of the dishonest Iturrigaray was so ambiguous during the critical situation in Mexico that he was finally deposed. The *ad interim* viceroy, Garibay, who was appointed by the faction which overthrew Iturrigaray, was too old and weak to govern well. The archbishop viceroy Lizana appointed by the junta of Seville was just as bad and many influential individuals of the American party continually took advantage of his feeble character. Under such administrators there was a considerable weakening of the Spanish hold on the frontiers and the Anglo-Americans tried to advance their aggressive territorial projects; they became bolder and bolder when the insurrection began in Mexico and plot

followed plot to encroach upon the southern territory. At the same time the internal conspiracies, which had been going on for many years, multiplied, revealing that there was a strong undercurrent of dissatisfaction in the country.

The war executives were a slight improvement over the other nineteenth century viceroys, since the regency did try to find capable men to fill the high position after the insurrection had broken out. Venegas, Calleja, and Apodaca, all military men, employed most of their efforts to quench the fires of revolution; at times it looked as if they might succeed, but their efforts were in vain because the colonists had become aware of the existence of better conditions in other nations quite different from those under which they had lived and the desire to obtain for themselves similar conditions was the aim of their activities. They were much exasperated when freedom of the press granted by the Cortes was suspended and the insistent demands for pecuniary contributions continued. The administrators had not acquired any liberal ideas and were of the old type, nor could they find any means to reconcile the independent spirit of the creoles with the Europeans. Mistaken policies and intrigues in Spain added to the difficulties of American administration, and it looked as if Ferdinand the faithless, who annulled the Spanish Constitution of 1812, would take away the last vestige of liberalism; therefore the secret movement for independence and separation from the mother country slowly gained headway. O'Donojú, the last of the viceroys, realized that things had gone too far in New Spain, that the people wanted independence, and that he could never put into effect his elaborate instructions, consequently he made an agreement with General Iturbide at Córdoba for a constitutional government in Mexico headed by a prince of the royal family. The political way was thus paved for Mexican independence, but there were to be many stormy years before its benefits could be achieved, for the people had to learn self-government, about which they were absolutely ignorant because they never had obtained any experience during the colonial period.

IX

FOREIGN INFLUENCES

Foreign influences, which infiltrated into New Spain in spite of all attempts to exclude them, gave a powerful impetus to events in that country. More and more the creoles and mestizos, as an increasing party of opposition to Spanish rule, adopted the ideas of Great Britain, France, and the United States, and were animated by European occurrences to strengthen their position. Yet a considerable portion of the inhabitants remained loyal to the established traditions and practices of Spanish absolutism, for their positions under the government of the peninsula determined to a great extent their ideas. The viceroys, judges of the *audiencia*, intendants, subdelegates, the rest of the official hierarchy, and the principal members of the clergy, as appointees of the crown, were advocates of the ideas involved in the organizations which they represented and, when forces beyond their control finally threatened to destroy the autocratic system, they were the last to modify their views in favor of liberalism.

French ideas had greatly influenced Spain since the beginning of the Bourbon régime and finally they affected the overseas possessions. The intendant system introduced into America was a French institution, but most important were the philosophic, economic, and political ideas which were eagerly accepted by a small portion of the inhabitants. The futile effort of the Inquisition to keep such writings out of Mexico has been discussed. The doctrines of the French Revolution were carried to Mexico, they increased the desire for independence, and helped to prepare the way for the inevitable revolution. The French had entered New Spain since the time of the Bourbon kings and after the cession of Louisiana to Spain many of them were employed

in Spanish colonial service.¹ It was very easy for Frenchmen to cross the border into Mexico and some came as servants of Spanish officials. French cooks were very much in demand in Mexico and even viceroys brought them in their retinues. Some Frenchmen served as barbers, doctors, military men, traders, musicians, farmers, or miners.² Others were naturalized and permitted to live permanently in New Spain, as for example Jorge Hourat and Julian Pemartín, a miner of Zacatecas, both of whom were industrious, of good character, and had married in the colony.³

In 1792 it was found that the French in Mexico City, some occupied as hair-dressers, others as cooks, merchants, a doctor, and a surgeon held gatherings which some Europeans and inhabitants of the colony attended. There they engaged in free conversation and applauded the maxims and doctrines of the Convention of Paris. Some zealous or rather inquisitive individuals reported the matter to Viceroy Revillagigedo, who did not take any other measure than to call attention to the chief authors of those meetings. The next year the archbishop was informed that in the town of San Agustín de las Cuebas, San Ángel, and other adjacent towns, there were similar conversations and worse ones by Manuel Enderica, a European owner of an hacienda in the first town; the ecclesiastic Gregorio Oliden of San Ángel was reported to be one of them and he was put in prison, but was not found guilty.⁴ Finally the great Revillagigedo found it necessary to arrest and reprimand the surgeon, Esteban Morel, who united with Bernardo Marimón, Manuel Enderica, and others to hold meetings. Later Morel continued his relationship with various Frenchmen

¹Herbert E. Bolton, *Athanase de Mézières and the Louisiana-Texas Frontier, 1768-1780* (Cleveland, 1914), I, 88.

²John Rydjord, "The French Revolution and Mexico." *The Hispanic American Historical Review*. Feb. 1929, pp. 87-88.

³Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, Feb. 14, 1798, AGI, 1139 (88-1-2). Audiencia de Méjico; *ibid.*, Madrid, Feb. 10, 1815, num. 8, AGI, 1146 (88-1-9). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴Arzobispo de Mexico al Exmo. Señor Don Eugenio de Laguno Amirola. Mexico, Oct. 4, 1794, num. 21 reservada, AGI, 1886 (92-4-10). Audiencia de Méjico.

and the Spaniard Francisco Roxas, a man of Jacobin ideas.⁶ Viceroy Branciforte took drastic measures against French ideas and would not permit foreigners to enter the country; others were expelled from the kingdom and the persecution was extended to various Spaniards and Mexicans.⁷ When the war broke out between France and Spain many Frenchmen who had been in Mexico for twenty or thirty years were mistreated. One of them, fearing the barbarous spectacle of an *auto de fe*, committed suicide in the prison of the Inquisition and his body was burned in the plaza at the Quemadero. Some respectable European magistrates raised their voice against those acts of injustice and violence and told the court that such deeds only caused hostility, but their advice was not followed. The increase of the armed force proved that the mistrust of the metropolis had been aroused.⁷

There were a number of French sympathizers who secretly encouraged revolutionary ideas and an independent spirit in Mexico. A criminal case was carried on against Francisco Roxas Abreu y Rocha because it was thought that he desired the freedom of the government and favored the ideas of the French republic. On the morning of August 24, 1794, at dawn there were fixed in different public places of the capital eulogies of the French government and an anonymous paper, which related the proceedings of the French Assembly, and was addressed to Viceroy Branciforte. The letter was submitted for examination to the criminal judges of the audiencia and Spanish witnesses against Roxas, who was believed to be involved in the matter, were heard by the alcalde, Pedro Jacinto Valenzuela. The first six witnesses said that Roxas called the Spanish king a tyrant, supported the maxims and doctrines of the French, tried to persuade the Mexicans that those ideas were holy and true, and that, in spite of Spain, the entire

⁶Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, Feb. 15, 1800, AGI, 1788 (91-6-23). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁷Alamán, I, 127-128.

⁷Humboldt, IV, 262-263, 266.

world would recognize the French republic. He cited texts of sacred writings to show that kings existed for the punishment of the people. Another six witnesses were questioned; some answered the same as the first group, others said nothing, and others denied the charges. Roxas was arrested and imprisoned, but he declared that he knew nothing and he denied the charges. He said that his accusers wished to make him a criminal by saying such things of him or it was because of their little intelligence. What he had remarked was that the French committed an enormous parricide when they trusted in their forces, that the French system would not be sustained against the government of kings because an administration managed by parties was unstable and would be overthrown, that the French people had not done wrong for they only threw off the yoke which oppressed them wishing their freedom which was the right of people, and that many wise persons said the constitution which the dead king of France signed was a wise and great work. He did not speak disrespectfully of the régime of kings in general, since he asserted that monarchs were sent by God and were not tyrants. He declared that he thought well of the Spanish sovereign and like a true Spaniard was grieved to see his forces abandoned, and he would not be so mad as to advocate rising against him. The criminal chamber was divided in its opinions about Roxas. One judge did not think the charges were sufficient, hence he advised that he should be pardoned and allowed to return to Spain to live with his wife and take care of his interests; another believed that he did carry on conversation relative to the delicate matters and that he would always be guilty of criticism, although he had done it only to obtain more education. The other two judges were of the same opinion and thought that the viceroy should take charge of him owing to the condition of his health until a decision might come from the king; and the other two judges maintained that there was not sufficient justification for the grave excesses of Roxas and that he should go to Spain, for he only spoke without reflection and prudence. The viceroy permitted Roxas to be

freed under bond and the Council of the Indies recommended that the king should pardon him in order that he might live with his wife in Spain.⁸

Juan Domingo Durroy, a Frenchman, was accused of scandalous conversations with different persons about religion and the monarchical government, particularly with the Spaniard Josef Joaquín Ximénez, who stated that Durroy had said that his countrymen would do well to throw off the yoke which oppressed them, that he believed in freedom of conscience and that everybody should live according to the law which he wished, that God had chosen them to be subject to all the world; that viceroys, judges, lawyers, notaries, and other officials were thieves, and ecclesiastics did not do more than say mass without discharging their obligations. It was reported that Ximénez became angry at Durroy because he would not loan him one hundred pesos, therefore after he had waited for one month and a half he denounced him. The possessions of the Frenchman were confiscated and he was sent to Spain, but later he was permitted to return to Mexico to attend to his interests and to live with his wife, Juana García, an inhabitant of Mexico City.⁹

Other French sympathizers met at the inn of Juan Aroche to discuss the views and activities of the French Assembly. There they drank to the health of Spain's enemy and played a prohibited game of cards to amuse themselves. They were very well informed since they received letters from France, the French West Indies, and from Philadelphia. They obtained such dangerous material as a speech of Lafayette and the stirring *La Marseillaise* with its martial music. Quite a large number of the suspects arrested were found to be partisans of the French Assembly. One of the bolder spirits among them, Juan Malvert, declared publicly that "man was free and equal," that the king was no different

⁸Consulta del consejo de las Indias. Madrid, Feb. 15, 1800, AGI, 1788 (91-6-23). Audiencia de Méjico. The real author of the seditious documents escaped.

⁹*Ibid.*, Madrid, Jan. 14, 1803, AGI, 1140 (88-1-3). Audiencia de Méjico.

from other people except that he wore a crown, that the principal ideas of the Assembly should be followed by everybody, and that it was well that the sovereigns were executed. Those shocking opinions were shared by many of Malvert's associates and their views on religion were considered heretical. The Frenchmen in Mexico were looking forward to the success of the French arms and the extension of the French system to other nations of the world. Investigation showed that they were making preparations to help the world movement of their nation. Several Frenchmen were arrested in connection with the conspiracy of Juan Guerrero which has been discussed. It was reported that Durrey, Mexanes, and Fournier spoke of the tyranny of kings and of the advantage of the Assembly which was in conformity with the "natural liberty of man and the equality of all." Juan Laurel, the cook of Revillagigedo, and Dr. Esteván Morel were found to be members of the Freemasons and it was said that there were several others in the capital. Morel carried on correspondence with relatives in France who were supporters of the revolution and he declared that the ideas of the Assembly would be brought to Mexico. Viceroy Branciforte not only ordered that Frenchmen should be apprehended but also Spaniards who held the views of the French; the authorities were warned to proceed with the greatest secrecy and make a general arrest on the morning of January 1, 1795, but it seemed that only the French residents of Mexico City were taken on that day. The viceroy continued the prosecution for some time and by the end of October he had twenty-one French prisoners ready for deportation to Spain, and many more were being tried. The Frenchmen from the provinces were brought to Vera Cruz in the early part of 1796 and on May 14, two vessels with twenty-one Frenchmen on the first and twenty on the second set sail from Cádiz. Before the work of deportation was finished the European war was ended by the Treaty of Basel. The next year the severity relaxed for Spain was then allied with France and

owing to French petitions some of the suspects were set free and their property restored.¹⁰

French propaganda was active in America and it is indubitable that France had designs upon Mexican territory. The ideas of the French Revolution recognized no bounds and its leaders considered the Spanish colonies a fertile field for their attempts. They too wanted to gain commercial advantages, therefore they were willing to listen to the machinations of Francisco de Miranda, knight-errant of Spanish American independence, but European affairs occupied too much of their time to send an expedition to Mexico, which was to be their special sphere of influence. The Louisiana border was considered a more fruitful place for French activity since many of the inhabitants showed sympathy for the revolutionary doctrines. Governor Gayoso de Lemos at Natchez said that the majority of the inhabitants of Louisiana were fond of novelty, had communication with France, and heard of the revolution in that nation with the greatest pleasure. The governor added, "I feared that if war were declared on France, we would find few inhabitants of Lower Louisiana who would sincerely defend the country from any undertaking of that nation."¹¹ Many of the inhabitants of that northern province were French and Americans whose loyalty to Spain was only nominal and they would have welcomed the domination of their former nation. Louisiana was the field in which Genêt was to work and sow the germs of rebellion. He was to try to obtain the support of the United States by suggesting that it was to the interest of the Americans to oppose George III against liberty. He was to encourage the principles of liberty and independence in Louisiana and other provinces which bordered on the northern republic. By working in unison the two nations could strike a blow at the commercial exclusion of Spain, extend

¹⁰John Rydjord, "The French Revolution and Mexico." *The Hispanic American Review*. Feb. 1929, p. 89 et seq.

¹¹James A. Robertson, *Louisiana under the Rule of Spain, France, and the United States, 1785-1807* (Cleveland, 1911), I, 283.

ideas of liberty, and their efforts would soon lead to the liberation of Spanish America. President Washington's proclamation of neutrality in 1793 put an end to Genêt's prospects of aid from the United States government and his aggressive conduct endangered the whole project. In 1793 a Jacobin society in Philadelphia was spreading its pernicious ideas by means of a printed circular, headed "Liberty and Fraternity" from "The Freemen of France to their Brothers of Louisiana." It declared that France had achieved its freedom and was ready to give its powerful assistance to those who would follow its example; it urged Frenchmen of Louisiana to profit by the great lesson they had received, to establish a republic, and form an alliance with France and the United States. French interest in Louisiana did not cease after the dismissal of Genêt, nor had France given up the idea of emancipating Spanish America, since Flassau, in the foreign service section of the Committee of Public Safety, asserted in 1794 that France, having helped the British colonies, could do no less for the Spanish, and it might gain an immense field for its commercial activities.

Rumors were heard in Mexico that French revolutionists were coming directly from Europe to scatter their ideas and promote their system of government. A Mr. Folney, an American but an emissary of the French revolutionists, was reported to have embarked at Bordeaux on December 3, 1791, for New York. He was said to be so enthusiastic for the new French ideas that they had turned his head, therefore he was capable of the most dangerous undertakings. From New York he was to go to Martinique and from there to Mexico where he was to stir up a revolt. Viceroy Revillagigedo gave the strictest orders to officials of the seaports to arrest Folney if he tried to enter the country. A little later a royal order was sent to the viceroy telling him that six emissaries, headed by M. Kersaint, were to sail from Brest with seductive papers to encourage ideas of independence in Mexico. Mateo Coste, a Frenchman, married in Mexico, owner of an estate in the province of

Oaxaca, by profession a surgeon, and a contraband trader in fact, was reported to have been in El Guarico in Santo Domingo with two other Frenchmen from Mexico plotting against that colony. He proposed to land at Vera Cruz to aid the people oppressed by the Spanish government and the ministers of the Catholic religion. The viceroy took action immediately to obtain all the information he could about Coste and his companions and to seize them. Captain Ignacio Olaeta was appointed for the task and the intendant of Oaxaca, the governor of Vera Cruz, and other minor officials were ordered to aid him as much as possible. The Frenchman was sly enough to avoid the trap laid for him and was never found by Olaeta, although for some time the Spanish official watched all the boats that entered Coatzacoalcos where Coste was expected to land. El Guarico also served as a connecting link between the project of Coste and the schemes of Genêt, since the French fleet which had been stationed there left to furnish aid for Genêt, and it was believed that an attack would soon be made on the Spanish possessions.¹²

With the rise of Napoleon colonial officials continued to be worried by French designs in New Spain. José Pablo Valiente declared that there was danger of uprisings because France might try to introduce her ideas, that many people were occupied in outlining plans of a new government and all minds were in a dangerous ferment, and that it was easy to see the ambitious looks of Napoleon toward the Spanish dependencies in order to indemnify the French for the loss of their colonies.¹³ The Spanish government gave orders for the confiscation of the possessions of the marquis of Branciforte and the duke of Terranova because they had aided the French. The former gentleman did not have anything of value to lose, but the latter had large estates and the viceroy proceeded to put the measure into

¹²John Rydjord, "The French Revolution and Mexico." *The Hispanic American Historical Review*. Feb. 1929, p. 75 et seq.

¹³Sobre sistema de gobierno de America. Sevilla, Sept. 16, 1809, AGI, 141-5-11. Audiencia de Méjico. BL.

effect.¹⁴ The far-seeing Abad Queipo told the king that New Spain was exposed to a general insurrection if his wisdom did not prevent it because the electric fire of the French Revolution, wounding simultaneously all the nations, destroying some, agitating others, caused the first elements of division and the desire for independence in New Spain. He said that the magnitude and brilliance of the successes of the tyrant Napoleon blinded other nations, misled men, and uplifted that emperor in all parts of the globe by an idolatry which made him appear the greatest hero in history, the regenerator of the world, and that he was irresistible. On account of those ideas, he asserted that the Americans thought the character of the Spanish people was extinguished and the metropolis lost forever the moment Napoleon occupied it; they believed it impossible to conquer him and from that time they began, as was natural, to occupy themselves with ideas of independence and the means to realize it if Spain could not be reconquered.¹⁵

Napoleon also sent his agents to the Spanish colonies to make secret plans to carry out his aggressive designs there. Viceroy Iturrigaray ordered the governors of Nuevo Santander and Nuevo León to detain any suspicious foreigner who might come to those provinces. An individual by the name of Octaviano D. Alvímar presented himself in the town of Nacodoches in Texas where he was apprehended by the authorities. His passport was examined and it was inferred that it was issued in Bordeaux on November 25, 1807, by Monsieur Fouchete in order that he might go to the United States. The commandant-general of the Provincias Internas informed the viceroy about Alvímar and requested that the Frenchman should be sent to the fortress of Perote as a prisoner of war to be transferred to Spain unless his papers, when they were examined, should demand some other measure. When the documents were inspected and translated they showed that the man was in the French

¹⁴Alamán, I, 307.

¹⁵Representación al rey. Valladolid, May 30, 1810, AGI, 2375 (95-4-2): Audiencia de Méjico.

army in 1802 destined for Santo Domingo under Le Clerc by whom he was commissioned in the same year to go to Caracas, Cartagena, and Santa Fé to seek aid for his army, that he treated with the magistrates of those provinces, that he was likewise in Havana, and was a relative of Napoleon. Since he concealed the motives of his coming to New Spain, it was not certain that he was sent as a spy to prepare the minds of the inhabitants of that vast dominion for revolution. The arrogance with which he answered the questions asked him, and the ideas of his valor, talents, ability, and other qualifications recommended by French generals, according to the papers, proved without doubt that he was not of humble origin. Alvimar escaped from the presidio of Monclova at midnight but was captured a league distant from it and more papers were taken from him—a letter to Napoleon advising him of his existence, another for Juan Baughan of Philadelphia to send him a trunk, another addressed to the governor of Baton Rouge to transmit a trunk of books to some port of the United States from whence it could easily be shipped to Europe, and a fourth to Louis Brichi to send him other trunks. Before he started out he had directed other letters to the viceroy's council, the archbishop, the commandant-general of the Provincias Internas, and to the viceroy to cover up his flight on the pretext that he went out to hunt, which was false. Viceroy Garibay did not want the Frenchman to be brought to the capital because of the excitement it might cause when the people learned that he was a spy of the wily Napoleon, therefore the order was issued for him to be taken to San Juan de Ulloa as soon as possible. When the prisoner was conducted as far as Xalapa some knives were found in his possession, which led his guard to believe that he contemplated flight. During his journey he made geographical sketches of all the places along the way since his imprisonment and that also looked as if he were doing it to show foreigners the condition of Mexico. At Vera Cruz Alvimar tried to bribe the governor of the fortress to let him escape by giving him a small coffer of

precious jewels and some money. He was kept in the awful fortress of San Juan de Ulloa until September 13, 1809, when he was sent to Spain.¹⁶

In the same year the archbishop viceroy, Lizana, ordered that the proclamations of Joseph Napoleon, dated in Madrid on Oct. 2, 1809, which came to Mexico should be burned.¹⁷ The next year Viceroy Lizana received information from the peninsula that F. Belmont, sent by the intrusive government to stir up the American dominions, was coming from Bordeaux to Philadelphia.¹⁸ The bishop of Nuevo León reported that the canon Juan Isidro Campos, a Frenchman, was causing trouble. He was a man of little intelligence who came from a commercial shop to the ecclesiastical estate; he assembled various Frenchmen in his house, he corresponded with others, among whom was the baron de Bastrop who was finally arrested by order of the commandant-general, and he showed the tenderest friendship for a Frenchman, suspected to be an emissary of Napoleon, who was being taken as a prisoner to Mexico City by order of the superior government.¹⁹ The count of Peñasco, in 1810, declared that the emissaries of Napoleon took advantage of the ignorance of the common people and raised up sedition in Zacatecas, since that was what the French wished to spread over all the world. He said that they knew very well that divided into parties the inhabitants would not have strength to resist them and that was how they made their conquests easy.²⁰

Benito Pérez received royal information on April 14, 1810, about emissaries and spies of Napoleon being sent

¹⁶Pedro Garibay al Exmo. Señor Dn. Pedro Cevallos. Mexico, Feb. 20, 1809, num. 7, AGI, 3169 A (99-7-8). Audiencia de Méjico. After independence Alvimar returned to Mexico and claimed great sums of money because of what had been taken from him, but he was not even listened to by Iturbide. Alamán, I, 297.

¹⁷Hernández y Dávalos, II, 32-33.

¹⁸*Revista de archivos, bibliotecas y museos*. July-Aug. 1914, p. 140.

¹⁹Primo obispo del nuevo reyno de León al Exmo. Sor. marques de las Hormazas. . . Monterrey, May 28, 1810, AGI, 3172 (99-7-11). Audiencia de Méjico.

²⁰Carta del conde del Peñasco al capitan D. Juan N. Oviedo. . . In Hernández y Dávalos, II, 54.

to New Spain to introduce disorder and anarchy, and that among them there were come scandalous Spaniards who collected in the United States in order to enter the territory secretly by land through the province of Texas or to be embarked for other Spanish possessions. The king commanded that no Spaniard or foreigner of any kind or nation might disembark in any Spanish ports of America without presenting authoritative documents and passports given by the legitimate officials in his name, and that the viceroys, governors, military and civil functionaries should observe this strictly. If any spies got in by accident those high officials might impose capital punishment upon them without need to consult the monarch, and they should confiscate the cargoes of the boats in which they came.²¹ It was reported that José María Navarro came from the intrusive government bringing packages of documents, which served for credentials, to the viceroy, audiencia, and secular cabildo of the capital, but the real purpose was to use his influence to get the people of Mexico to unite with the French government in the peninsula.²² A list of the agents of Joseph Napoleon, under Desmolard who were expected to arrive in America, was sent to Pérez.²³

José Luyando, a citizen of Mexico City, said that the imprisonment of Viceroy Iturrigaray gave an excuse to the agents of Napoleon to stir up discontent among the gachupines and creoles, that they did not lose any means to arouse hostility, and that the members of the audiencia knew of the work of those spies in Mexico.²⁴ The Spanish minister in Philadelphia sent Viceroy Venegas a letter in which he enclosed two copies of a proclamation printed in Madrid on March 28, 1810, in which Joseph Bonaparte appealed to the

²¹Benito Pérez al Exmo. Sor. Dn. Eusevio de Bardoxi y Azara. Mérida de Yucatan, July 12, 1810, num. 17, AGI, 3183 (99-7-22). Audiencia de Méjico.

²²*Ibid.*, Sept. 25, 1810, num. 19, AGI, 3183 (99-7-22). Audiencia de Méjico.

²³*Ibid.*, Sept. 25, 1810, num. 20, AGI, 3183 (99-7-22). Audiencia de Méjico.

²⁴José Luyando al ministro universal. Mexico, Sept. 15, 1810, AGI, 1896 (92-5-4). Audiencia de Méjico.

faithful inhabitants of America to recognize and obey him, and if they did not do this they should make themselves independent of the metropolis. The executive transmitted one copy to the Inquisition for that tribunal to pass an edict to forbid the reading of it, and the other was publicly burned by the hand of the executioner on September 25.²⁵ In the same year Venegas received from the ecclesiastical tribunal of Puebla some certifications sent by a priest of the cathedral of Santander in Vizcaya. One document was on stamped paper and the seal said "Joseph Napoleon I by Grace of God, king of Spain and of the Indies." The obnoxious documents were burned by order of the viceroy by the hand of the executioner.²⁶

The French emissary Juan Gustabo Dewit, a man almost twenty-six years old, arrived in Mérida on August 15, 1810. He came from the United States on a boat called "*Buena Intención*" with a cargo of maize, flour, and other provisions to aid the province of Yucatan, and with a certificate from the consul of Ferdinand VII. He spoke Spanish and was invited to dinner as was practiced with foreigners who came to that city. After dinner he gave to Benito Asnar, who was with one of the officials of the secretariat, a paper saying that it related to the cargo. Asnar did not open the document until he went to his room and he was filled with horror with what he read; he would have arrested Dewit at once, but he went to consult the bishop. Then he sent word for Dewit to meet him after prayers that evening in the ayuntamiento because he said that the paper left him full of doubts and confusion and it needed to be explained. Asnar next tried to find out whether the people of the city had learned of the contents of the paper and were participants of its awful ideas. Dewit arrived at the appointed time and made a long eulogy of José Miguel de Azanza, minister of the intrusive Joseph Bonaparte, and of his beneficent

²⁵Francisco Xavier Venegas á Eusebio de Bardoxi y Azara. Mexico, Oct. 31, 1810, num. 8, AGI, 1321 (89-1-19). Audiencia de Méjico.

²⁶Francisco Xavier Venegas al ministro de estado. Mexico, Oct. 23, 1811, num. 65, AGI, 1321 (89-1-19). Audiencia de Méjico.

ideas for the Americas. He said that Joseph was a good man and he was sent by him, since he believed that many of the chiefs of the colonial possessions did not want the bonds with the metropolis to be broken. Then an adjutant was summoned to take Dewit to the fortress for safe keeping. Next morning the other officials were informed of the event, the papers of the Frenchman were examined, and the ayuntamiento decided to try the case. It was found that none of the inhabitants of the city were implicated in the matter.²⁷ Dewit was sentenced to death as a spy and his possessions were confiscated in favor of the treasury, but at the time there was no executioner in the city or a criminal who wished to serve as such. An Indian condemned to capital punishment was told that he would be pardoned if he would execute Dewit, however he refused to do what he did not understand and to take away the life of a man who he said had done no wrong. It was decided to read the sentence to the Frenchman at the foot of the gallows and to burn there the infamous agreement of Bayona and the orders which accompanied him. Dewit was put to death on December 12, after he had made reconciliation with the Catholic Church, for he was a Lutheran, and had received the last sacrament.²⁸

In 1811 Viceroy Venegas was informed that Jayme Atanasio Amblimonte, an agent of Napoleon, went to the United States in order to seduce Mexico, therefore he gave the strictest orders to officials of the ports and the frontiers, including the captain-general of Havana, to take the greatest care to prevent the introduction of suspicious individuals and papers.²⁹ A certain José Ixtolingue and other French agents were to be sent among the caciques to cause uprisings. The henchmen of Napoleon tried to flood Mexico

²⁷Ayuntamiento de Mérida de Yucatan al ministro universal. Nov. 16, 1810, and Nov. 17, 1810, AGI, 1820 (92-1-6). Audiencia de Méjico.

²⁸Benito Pérez al Exmo. Sor. Don Eusebio de Bardoxi y Azara. Mérida de Yucatan, Dec. 20, 1810, num. 22, AGI, 5183 (99-7-22). Audiencia de Méjico.

²⁹Francisco Xavier Venegas á Eusebio de Bardoxi y Azara. Mexico, Sept. 27, 1811, num. 27, AGI, 1321 (89-1-19). Audiencia de Méjico.

with circulars, orders, and periodicals favorable to their cause, but the viceroy ordered that all those which were detected should be burned by the hand of the executioner, and he had to issue proclamations which told of the events of the Spanish government to counteract the false impressions of the French periodicals.³⁰ The cruelties of Napoleon were related to the people to make them hate the French and to put them on their guard against French ideas. It was said that the evils which the monstrous and ambitious Napoleon perpetrated in the whole Spanish nation were incredible and there were no expressions in the Spanish language to narrate the miseries to which he wished to reduce the people. It was reported also that at the beginning of his cruel domination he had ordered his generals to send to France one hundred thousand Spaniards tied two by two with rings of iron on their thumbs; that there should be taken to his country all the garrisons and troops of the peninsula and the regular and secular clergy of all classes, leaving only those who could take charge of the revenues and interests of the churches and monasteries; that the archbishops, bishops, and all the people of wealth or distinction should hand over their houses, goods, and possessions to the French soldiers; and that all those who should resist his measures were to be subjected to blood and fire, even those conquered without resistance should be inspired by the terror of putting the knife to six or more of the principal families. It was declared that the blood congealed in the veins to think of such cruelties and no human heart was ever so perverted as the tyrant Napoleon's. There were robberies, sackings, and rapine, and it was believed that the Americas might suffer the same fate if he obtained a hold on them.³¹ Viceroy Apodaca said that in his opinion and in that of all sensible men of the country, the causes of the rebellion were philosophy, illuminism, foreign books,

³⁰*Revista de archivos, bibliotecas y museos*. July-Aug. 1914, pp. 140-141.

³¹Subscripción a que convida el consulado del reyno de la Nueva Galicia, para socorros comunes y particulares en la patria madre. . . Consulado de Guadalajara, Nov. 5, 1808, AGI, 1819 (92-1-5). Audiencia de Méjico.

especially French ones, the introduction into Mexico and the other overseas possessions of Spain on different occasions of emissaries in order to influence the minds of the natives, and the emulation of foreign cabinets against Spain for the possession of its rich colonies—the origin of which was as old as the conquest.⁸²

England too with its liberal ideas exerted an influence upon the Spanish colonies and its commercial relations had been welcomed by the inhabitants from an early date. The British minister Mr. Erskine received offers of Spanish subjects from all New Spain who desired to put themselves under his protection as independent people in case of the conquest of the metropolis by Napoleon.⁸³ On several occasions England had considered plans for the liberation of Mexico in order to obtain greater commercial advantages. The forerunner of Spanish-American independence, Francisco de Miranda, had proposed to Great Britain that it should liberate Spanish America if war would break out with Spain over the Nootka Sound controversy, and for a time it looked as if Pitt favored the project. Without doubt, if war had broken out there would have been an attempt to free the Spanish colonies by England, but Spain decided to make an agreement with that nation relative to possessions along the Pacific coast and to give up its exclusive claims to those territories.⁸⁴ Among the papers taken from captured rebels in Mexico there was one which said that Great Britain offered peace, freedom, and commerce to New Spain. Morelos had tried to obtain arms and ammunition from that nation and he gave his word of honor that the contracts would be fulfilled. The English ministers admitted that commerce was carried on in arms and other articles which Mexico needed. Evidently an alliance was sought with England, for José Holences Coffin, the captain

⁸²*Revista de archivos, bibliotecas y museos.* Sept.-Dec. 1914, p. 234.

⁸³*Ibid.*, July-Aug. 1914, p. 139.

⁸⁴For further information on the subject see Wm. R. Manning, "The Nootka Sound Controversy." *Annual Report of the American Historical Association*, 1904; Wm. S. Robertson, "Francisco de Miranda and the Revolutionizing of Spanish America." *Ibid.*, 1907, I, 189-539.

of the vessel *Arethusa* said he had received instructions from his government not to give any hope of aid, but he offered his services as a friend and always pleaded for peace and the support of the Spanish government in order to avoid bloodshed and for the sake of humanity.⁸⁵

Foreigners continued to work their way into the Spanish colonies in spite of the laws which tried to prevent it and gave viceroys, presidents of the audiencias, and governors power to transport strangers and suspicious persons to Spain. The intendant of Porto Rico reported that there were many foreigners of all nations in that island employed in agriculture, of which industry they had the best establishments; they did not cause the government the least trouble and he said that the abandonment of their occupation would be very harmful to the island.⁸⁶

The influence of the new republic of the United States was seen immediately in New Spain, New Granada, and Venezuela and designs of revolution began to appear. The count of Aranda revealed to the king the consequences which the ambitious policy of the northern republic would have and the desires of the Spanish colonies to imitate it; therefore, according to Alamán, he suggested that three *infantes* should be placed on the thrones of Mexico, Peru, and Nueva Granada as a remedy for this. He thought that the Spanish sovereign could then take the title of emperor, but his plans were not heeded.⁸⁷ A certain Fray Melchor Martínez maintained that the "republic of Boston", surrounded by many peoples desirous to imitate its ideas of liberty, recognized and feared the weakness of its existence; therefore it made the greatest efforts to enlarge its boun-

⁸⁵Contestaciones de los rebeldes de Nueva España para entablar negociaciones con los Ingleses, Anglo-Americanos, y con los negros de Santo Domingo, halladas entre los papeles sorprendidos á Morelos en Puruarán y Tlacotepec, 1814, quaderno 3, AGI, 136-7-9. Indiferente General de Nueva España.

⁸⁶Extracto de varios expedientes sobre cumplimiento de la real orden de 14 de Abril de 1809 que manda transportar de America á España los extrangeros y naturales que sean sospechosos. AGI, 1155 (88-1-19). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁸⁷Alamán, I, 126-127. No manuscripts on this subject have been found in the Archives of the Indies.

daries and to explain its system of government, as the only method of providing for its stability and maintenance. For this purpose it put into action all imaginable means, without hesitating at the most iniquitous and immoral, in order to attract the Spanish colonists to its depraved designs. He said that freedom of conscience and the freedom of the press assisted it to publish and spread subversive and seditious principles and maxims, which always found reception with the majority of men ruled by ignorance and malice. He added,

"The clandestine trade and the permission to fish for whales introduce traders and adventurers from the United States into all the coasts, ports, islands, and other Spanish possessions, giving them opportunity to persuade the Spanish colonists of the flourishing state and advantageous situation of their country, decrying the Spanish colonial government and subjection to the mother country in Europe as ignominious slavery. They magnify the riches and extent of those provinces; proclaim the injustice and tyranny with which the wealth is carried off to enrich Europe; describe the state of obscurity, abandonment and civil nullity in which the colonists live; and offer with impudence all the aid of their great power to the people who may wish to shake off the yoke of legitimate and just government. Moreover they have adopted and put into execution the most powerful means to undermine and destroy the political and religious edifice of the Spanish colonies, sending clandestinely to all and each one of those possessions subjects for the purpose of establishing themselves and becoming citizens, with the design of perverting and destroying allegiance to the mother country."⁸⁸

Martínez declared also that the Bostonians came as spies, married into the principal families, and sought influence in the government; they were not embarrassed by the differ-

⁸⁸Quoted from Amunátegui, *Los Precursores de la independencia de Chile*, III, 264. In Moses, *The Intellectual Background of the Revolution in South America 1810-1824*, pp. 39-41.

ences of religion, for they became nominally Catholics as a means to acquire freedom and security to advance themselves and to take an active part in seducing the inhabitants from their attachment to Spain.³⁹

Individual Americans peering over the borders were quite willing to take a hand in the liberation of the Spanish American colonies, because it would be glorious to spread liberty in a king-ruled country. Among them were George Rogers Clark, his brother-in-law, Dr. James O'Fallon, Daniel Clark, and Benjamin Logan in the United States, also Thomas Paine, Gilbert Imlay, and Joel Barlow in Paris.⁴⁰ Those men were ready to cooperate with the French under the crafty Genêt against Spain. Early in 1793 it was proposed that four men should be sent to Philadelphia to act as the nucleus of a committee for the revolutionizing of Louisiana and the other Spanish colonies.⁴¹ The committee was to be composed of two Americans, Joel Barlow and Stephen Sayre, and of two Frenchmen; they were instructed not only to seek means to overthrow the Spanish colonies in America, but also to initiate the revolution of Miranda. George Rogers Clark was an enthusiast for the project and told the French government that he wished to lead an expedition against the Spanish. He had wild ideas of first capturing St. Louis and New Orleans and then Pensacola, Santa Fé, and the rest of New Mexico. He believed that if New Mexico and Louisiana were taken all Spanish America with its mines might be obtained.⁴² When Genêt came to the United States his American agents began their activities on the Florida border, but they did not accomplish much because of the bad luck of their chief. After the downfall of Genêt they still talked of the advantages of the liberation of Louisiana, since it would be an excellent

³⁹*Ibid.*, 41.

⁴⁰Wm. S. Robertson, "Francisco de Miranda and the Revolutionizing of Spanish America." *Annual Report of the American Historical Association*. 1907, I, pp. 249, 286.

⁴¹Documents relating to Louisiana in *The American Historical Review*. III, 491-510.

⁴²Selections from the Draper Collection of Documents in the *Annual Report of the American Historical Association*. 1896, I, 967-971.

example for Mexico—an example which would soon banish Spanish despotism from all South America.⁴³

The hostile Indians of the north were continually furnished with arms by the Anglo-Americans and French sympathizers. Antonio de Argumedo believed that the barbarous Indians protected by those nations, in case of war, could influence the minds of the vassals so much that they would refuse obedience and vassalage to the king and cause such great difficulty that a new conquest would be necessary; perhaps this would be impossible since the ponderous riches of the Americas were the envy and greed of all nations.⁴⁴ With the alienation of Louisiana the Spanish empire began to decay, and the Anglo-Americans trespassed on Spanish territory; they penetrated into the interior of Mexico and the gulf abounded with corsairs and contrabandists. At the same time ideas of hatred for a monarchy and the love of a republic were scattered everywhere; thus the genius, ambition, the mercantile system, and the independence of the United States inspired all the Spanish colonies to emancipate themselves.⁴⁵

After 1803 there were many notices of the clandestine entrance into Mexico of foreigners from the United States,⁴⁶ and after the insurrections began there was always fear that they would aid the rebels. A nationalistic and rather bombastic article in a United States newspaper alarmed the Mexican authorities in November, 1810. The author stated that the United States would never acquire all the advantages of the Louisiana purchase until the Floridas were placed under its protection because the relations between those provinces were very intimate along the Gulf of Mexico and they were closely connected with the commerce of the American west. He said that his nation should not

⁴³*The American Historical Review*, III, 508-510.

⁴⁴Antonio de Argumedo al consejo de Indias. Huejutla, Dec. 20, 1803, num. 36, AGI, 1790 (91-6-25). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴⁵"Documento histórico perteneciente al reinado de Fernando VII." *Revista Mexicana*. Mexico, 1835. In *Papeles varios*, 149, num. 10. pp. 416-418.

⁴⁶Gobernación del estado libre de las Tamaulipas. In *Matamoras Archives*, VIII, p. 184. BL.

limit itself to the acquisition of those two provinces only, but should obtain control of the rights of entrance and egress of the whole Mexican Gulf and that would mean to possess Cuba. He believed that the purchase of the Floridas would be of great benefit to future generations and would insure commerce with the west, thus almost all North America would be under the jurisdiction of the United States and that would make the navigation of the rivers free from their sources to the sea. The writer also thought that Cuba should be bought since it was the key to the commerce of half of the continent and it was to the interest of America to secure it in order to guarantee its rights.⁴⁷

On February 20, 1811, the viceroy sent to the minister of state an official letter directed to him by the vice-consul of New Orleans, Diego Morphy, in which the latter said he had heard that an expedition was being prepared in Baton Rouge against Mobile and Pensacola, and that the United States had granted each enlisted individual one hundred measures of land and the necessary expenses for his services.⁴⁸ The next year the Spanish minister plenipotentiary in the United States said that the northern republic wished to extend its possessions in a straight line to the Pacific usurping from Spain the provinces of Texas, Nuevo Santander, Coahuila, New Mexico, and part of Nueva Vizcaya and Sonora. He declared that a plan had been drawn up for this and also included the island of Cuba as a natural possession of that nation, and he enclosed a map which showed the boundaries of the territory which the United States desired to obtain from Spain. He stated that the Americans had adopted, as the means of carrying out their plans, sedition, intrigue, the sending of agents to stir up dissensions and civil war in the Mexican provinces, and

⁴⁷Traducción de un capítulo inserto en una gaceta de este país. En la carta de Francisco Venegas al Exmo. Sor. Eusebio Barboxi y Azara. México, Nov. 10, 1810, num. 11, AGI, 3169A (99-7-8). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴⁸Francisco Xavier Venegas al ministro de estado. México, Feb. 20, 1811, num. 35, AGI, 1321 (89-1-19). Audiencia de Méjico.

were furnishing munitions to the insurgents; because of the revolution in New Spain an act of Congress united to the state of New Orleans the part of Florida on the Mississippi River and the Pearl River. The minister asserted that President Madison likewise looked covetously to East Florida, where adventurers gathered in 1811. In order to pretend to be friendly the United States government gave commands to check the abuses of those reckless men, but the minister said that the raising of forces to take Canada had as its real purpose the fomentation of insurrection in the Spanish provinces, and the usurpation or conquest of them; several points in West Florida were already occupied by the Americans.⁴⁰

In the same year the Spanish minister in the United States informed the ministry of state that some of the inhabitants of that northern nation made plans to introduce armed men into the Provincias Internas to aid the insurgents and to establish a republican government. He averred that a Spaniard called Bernardo Gutiérrez and a Mr. Scheller, residents in Natchitoches, were the first promoters of the infamous project. The viceroy of New Spain, the commandant-general of the Provincias Internas, and the governor of Vera Cruz were advised of the plot in order that they might punish the aggressive foreigners if they came to cause disturbances on Spanish territory. Francisco Murias, commander of the *Armada del Barlovento* (of the Windward Islands) sent a letter to José de Quevedo, governor of Vera Cruz, saying that the report was true, since there were five hundred men collected in Natchitoches for the purpose of penetrating into Mexico and torturing and robbing the inhabitants. A letter of the viceroy of March 15, 1813, said that Bernardo Gutiérrez had occupied the bay of Espíritu Santo with four hundred Anglo-Americans and three hundred rebels, but that José Tovar, governor of Texas, had blockaded them with one thousand men and

⁴⁰Pedro Labrador al Sr. secretario into. del despacho de la gobernación de ultramar. Cádiz, Oct. 24, 1812, AGI, 3173 (99-7-12). Audiencia de Méjico.

obliged them to ask for capitulation, which was refused, and more Spanish troops were being sent there.⁶⁰ On January 24, 1814, the minister of war was told that, although Bernardo Gutiérrez and José Álvarez de Toledo had occupied the province of Texas with a well-armed and organized force, the cavalry of Coahuila commanded by the lieutenant colonel, Ignacio Elizondo, was defeated. There were uprisings in many parts of the provinces of Nuevo Santander and Nuevo León, and many towns of the north were lost, but the commandant-general, Joaquín de Arredondo, had completely destroyed the factions of the petty chieftains and many of their followers were put to death or imprisoned.⁶¹ The rebels Gutiérrez and Toledo had become fugitives and had fled in the direction of New Orleans, where it was feared they would form new hostile groups. The neutral territory of Louisiana had been violated, for armed troops from the United States had entered it, contrary to the treaty of peace celebrated with that government. The commandant Arredondo declared that the Sabine River represented Spanish territory and all foreigners found on it would be shot.⁶²

Continuous insurrection in Mexico caused the foreigners of the north to become bolder than ever in their aggressions along the Spanish frontier. The loss of Louisiana to the United States with its twelve thousand white inhabitants was not considered such a great hardship, since it was not of much economic importance to Spain because the fur trade was controlled by foreigners, particularly by the English from Canada, who frequently penetrated the Spanish territory of the Missouri River region. The loss of the barrier province however soon began to be felt and the nearness to the Americans was realized when they com-

⁶⁰El ministerio de estado. May 20, 1813, AGI, 1901 (92-5-9). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁶¹Félix Calleja al ministro de guerra, continua dando cuenta de las Provincias Internas orientales. Mexico, Jan. 24, 1814, num. 26 reservada, AGI, 136-7-9. Indiferente General de Nueva España. BL.

⁶²Arredondo al Señor Félix Calleja. Mexico, Jan. 24, 1814, num. 26 reservada, *ibid.*, BL.

menced their excursions across the borders.⁵³ Sentiments of liberty also began to pass from mouth to mouth among the inhabitants of the frontiers, who desired to contribute to the emancipation of a nation and the extension of freedom. The manner in which the Spanish government had abandoned the huge province of Texas encouraged those ideas, for in 1819 there were only one hundred men of the royal troops in San Antonio and it was feared by some persons that within three months the territory would be conquered by the rebel army. The officials of Natchitoches announced publicly that July 4 would be celebrated on the banks of the Sabine and the citizens seemed to favor Texan independence and were anxious for a general revolution. The plan was to overthrow the small number of royalists and organize a government, then many emigrants would be summoned from the United States and land grants would be given them.⁵⁴

There was one plot after another by American adventurers to invade Texas, but fortunately many of them never materialized. In 1819 the rumor arose that an expedition of three thousand men was being prepared in Nashville to overthrow the Spaniards of Texas and the Americans hoped to introduce into the province many people who would occupy the land.⁵⁵ At the same time General Long, entitled chief of the army of Texas, declared,

"I started to Natchez, but a rumor of the enemy advancing on us compelled me to remain, or lose the confidence of the men I command and break up the expedition, which is now in the most prosperous condition. Nothing will prevent our success; we increase daily in soldiers and citizens join us from all parts, and I was much better supported than I expected—everything is in good train

⁵³Juan de Ortega al virey. June 6, 1819, quaderno num. 2, pp. 67-68, tom. 162. Archivo General de Mexico. BL.

⁵⁴*Gazeta de la Louisiana*. Num. 2672, New Orleans, July 7, 1819, quaderno num. 1, pp. 12-13, *ibid.*, BL.

⁵⁵*Gazeta de Louisiana*. Num. 2677, New Orleans, July 12, 1819, quaderno num. 1, pp. 14-15, tom. 162. Archivo General de Mexico. BL.

and there is no doubt of the success of the republican army.⁵⁶

Another letter of an official relative to the Texas expedition said that many people of the Colorado River region were getting ready to unite with the Americans, that the inhabitants of the western part of Texas were pleased to have an opportunity to throw off the yoke of the Spanish monarchy, and that every day men arrived who took part in and formed militias; some were republican Spaniards who were very useful.⁵⁷

On July 16 the Spanish consul at New Orleans, Felipe Fatio, reported to the viceroy that the expedition of three thousand men had crossed the Sabine River and was increased daily by the recruits who hastened there from all parts of the United States. To them should be added a party of Spaniards under the rebel leader Bernardo Gutiérrez, who was in the neighborhood of Nacogdoches. He thought that the party was commanded by an American called Jayme Long, formerly a surgeon and afterwards an official in the service of the northern republic. He said that the people expected to be aided by their government and perhaps the old Napoleonic French general, Charles Lallemant, was among them. He also asserted that he knew positively that the number of adventurers in the port of Galveston and along the Trinity River was augmented daily and they could be considered as a vanguard of those who had penetrated the Sabine region.⁵⁸ Three days later Mateo de la Sorna reported to the viceroy an article published at Natches on June 20, which stated that the revolutionists, aided by a portion of the citizens who had funds, had succeeded in forming a plan of operation there and that already various parties had gone out secretly and many more were prepared to depart. It added that their avowed

⁵⁶*Gazeta de Louisiana*. Nacogdochez, July 12, 1819, quaderno num. 2, p. 97, *ibid*.

⁵⁷*Gazeta el amigo de las leyes*. Num. 2266, New Orleans, July 16, 1819, quaderno num. 1, p. 18, *ibid*. BL.

⁵⁸Felipe Fatio al virey. New Orleans, July 16, 1819, quaderno num 2, pp. 75-77, tom. 162. Archivo General de Mexico. BL.

object was to establish agriculture in Texas, but nobody was mistaken about it. Sorna believed that the filibusterers would be successful, but he thought that if the Spanish authorities were informed there might still be a chance to prevent their evil designs.⁵⁹ The *Gazeta de New Orleans* of July 24, announced that a boat with about twenty men had gone out from the port of Baton Rouge and it seemed that they were preparing an expedition against Texas.⁶⁰ In August the Spanish captain, Miguel Puentes, of the *Amable Joaquina* heard rumors of pirate ships at Tampico and the viceroy then gave orders to all the commandants of the coasts to exercise great vigilance to prevent foreigners from striking a blow or disembarking on any part of the sea-coast.⁶¹ On August 14, Joaquín Palou, an inhabitant of Monterrey, informed the colonel of the royal armies, Antonio Martínez, that seditious Americans, many of whom were vagabonds, were trying to unite at the post of Natchitoches in order to establish themselves at Nacogdoches, make disturbances there, and prevent communication with the province; but there were no troops from the United States among them.⁶² On the 19th, the viceroy was told that an American boat from New Orleans commanded by a Spaniard named Valdés had explored Campeche and brought papers from the Spanish consul for the governor of Yucatan and the superior government of New Spain, the contents of which said that Monsieur Lallemant had already crossed the Sabine and gone in the direction of the Provincias Internas with three thousand men under the leadership of various adventurers. The consul stated that the total expedition consisted of five thousand men and that he had made a desperate effort to inform Joaquín de Arredondo, the commandant-general of those provinces,

⁵⁹Mateo de la Sorna al virey. Philadelphia, July 19, 1819, quaderno num. 2, p. 134, tom. 162. Archivo General de Mexico. BL.

⁶⁰*Gazeta de New Orleans*. Baton Rouge, July 24, 1819, quaderno num. 2, p. 80, *ibid.* BL.

⁶¹*Gazeta de New Orleans*. Aug. 1819, quaderno num. 1, pp. 2-7, *ibid.* BL.

⁶²Joaquín Palou á Antonio Martínez. Monterrey, Aug. 14, 1819, quaderno num. 3, p. 152, *ibid.* BL.

but he could not do it because the Americans hindered this. The number of the enemy, which was only about three hundred and sixty men, was greatly exaggerated, however Arredondo was commanded to send a force of five hundred or one thousand men against them.⁶³ The viceroy gave orders for strengthening the presidios of the province of Durango and Alexo García Conde, the commandant-general of the western part of the Provincias Internas, collected four hundred armed men to march wherever they might be needed to protect the frontiers.⁶⁴

The governor of Texas, Antonio Martínez, was told to be ready to put five hundred men on the frontier to check the invasion from the United States, but on September 16, he had not yet found the required number of soldiers.⁶⁵ Lieutenant-Colonel Ignacio Pérez was sent out with six hundred and forty-three men to examine the points of Nacogdoches, the Trinity River, and all the country up to the Sabine River, also to destroy any assemblies of adventurers found there.⁶⁶ By October 11 they reached the Colorado River and an Indian said that there were eight Americans in the region with powder, guns, and other articles to trade for mules and horses, and he knew that four others were in the pass of the Brazos River. Lieutenant Andrés Saldaña went with seventy men in pursuit of them, and on October 19, they took twelve Anglo-Americans near the Brazos River. Next day they marched toward the Trinity River and later on October 27, they captured three Americans and two Spaniards who were returning from the Comanche nation to the United States with seventy-three horses. At Nacogdoches, where they arrived next day, they took two Americans and one Spaniard with their families

⁶³Francisco Murias al virey de Nueva España. Vera Cruz, Aug. 19, 1819, quaderno num. 1, pp. 41, 44, tom. 162. Archivo General de Mexico. BL.

⁶⁴Alexo García Conde al virey. Durango, Sept. 13, 1819, quaderno num. 2, p. 115, *ibid.* BL.

⁶⁵Antonio Martínez al virey. Bejar, Sept. 16, 1819, quaderno num. 3, p. 172, *ibid.* BL.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, Bejar, Oct. 13, 1819, quaderno num. 4, p. 177, tom. 162. Archivo General de Mexico. BL.

and, when they heard that General Long had gone to another part of the Sabine River, they followed him. All along the way they arrested stray Americans—two at the ranch of Guajolote on November 2, five revolutionists and a negro slave of General Long on November 4, three Anglo-Americans on their way to the Indian nations; therefore on the 6th, Lieutenant Fernando Rodríguez went to the camp on the Trinity, conducting twenty-four Anglo-American prisoners, including six Spaniards and a negro slave. During the latter part of the month they captured other Americans and several negroes, which proved conclusively the activities of those foreigners along the Mexican frontiers.⁶⁷

The consul of Louisiana had advised Commander Conde concerning the project of the United States to invade New Mexico, hence he arranged for the governor of that province to investigate whether the Anglo-Americans had assembled along the Amarilla River.⁶⁸ A hostile reunion of the Indian nations of the Comanches, Lipanes, Tehuecanos, Tehuellases, and Llampariz near the Colorado River was discovered, but it is not known whether the Americans had anything to do with it.⁶⁹ By January 6, 1820, Arredondo reported that no enemies remained on the frontier who could cause the Spanish trouble, since they had all been killed by the troops and forty-four Anglo-American prisoners were guarded securely. A maritime force was needed however to exterminate the pirates in Galveston, who were commanded by Lafitte. Three new settlements had sprung up in neutral territory without the knowledge of the Spanish or the United States government; they had been founded by corrupt and vicious men who desired free-

⁶⁷Diario de las operaciones e demas ocurrencias en las marchas de la división expedicionaria, que con dirección a la frontera de Nacadoches, sale al mando del teniente colonel Don Ignacio Pérez. Oct. 1819, quaderno num. 6, pp. 437-450, tom. 162. Archivo General de Mexico. BL.

⁶⁸Alexo García Conde al virey. Durango, Oct. 1, 1819, quaderno num. 2, p. 120, *ibid.*

⁶⁹Juan Pérez al virey. Serralbo, Oct. 22, 1819, quaderno num. 4, p. 189, *ibid.*

dom. Arredondo thought that it was necessary to ask the United States to help destroy them.⁷⁰ Texas was in a deplorable condition after eight years of war on the frontier. There was a lack of cattle, grain, implements for agriculture, industry, and commerce, a scarcity of seed for planting, and little rain for five years; therefore the province had to be aided, for it also suffered a great financial deficit.⁷¹

"From the first cry of independence in Spanish America," said J. R. Poinsett, "the sentiments and sympathies of the people of the United States were manifested in favor of liberty."⁷² Consequently the United States admitted to Washington representatives of Spain during the French domination and later it did the same with Pascasio Ortiz, the plenipotentiary of the revolutionists in the name of Hidalgo. There was no doubt of the hidden complicity of the northern republic with the insurgents of Mexico and its bad faith toward Spain, for it continued to give aid to the revolutionists on its own soil and outside of it. Viceroy Calleja spoke frequently of the Anglo-Americans as aids of the revolution and the relations of the insurgents of Louisiana and the rebels of Vera Cruz. In the expedition of Mina individual Americans took part and the frontier was always the scene of disgruntled parties of numerous adventurers who penetrated into Texas and armed the Indians against Spain.⁷³ From August 1818 the government of the United States directed a formal proposition to Great Britain by which both powers agreed to recognize the independence of Buenos Aires, the only state that could be considered entirely freed from Spain at that date; all the attempts of

⁷⁰Joaquín de Arredondo al virey. Villa de Mier, Jan. 6, 1820, quaderno num. 6, pp. 339-341, tom. 162. Archivo General de Mexico. BL.

⁷¹Joaquín de Arredondo al virey. Villa de Mier, March 16, 1820, quaderno num. 6, pp. 297-299, *ibid.*

⁷²"Exposición de la conducta política de los Estados Unidos, para con las nuevas repúblicas de America." Mexico, 1827. In *Papeles varios*, 167, num. 4, p. 5.

⁷³*Revista de archivos, bibliotecas y museos*. July-Aug. 1914, pp. 139-140; *ibid.*, Sept.-Dec. 1914, pp. 229-230.

Spain to reestablish her authority in the colonies were frustrated by England and the United States.⁴

The foreign influences which helped to bring about the independence movement have been described. The example of independence in the United States and the recognition of the right of insurrection by the Spanish kings, when they helped that nation in its struggle with England, gave a blow to their own authority and aroused noble aspirations in the Spanish colonists. Then the French Revolution was an open school for all the people and the New World was amazed at the falling of kings, venerable institutions, and beliefs, but it saw the people rise upon the ruins and triumph.

England, the United States, and all mercantilistic nations were interested in the independence of Spanish America, for if Spain were victorious they saw that there would be no chance for their commerce with those nations. They therefore furnished arms and munitions and permitted their soldiers and mariners to support the cause of the Spanish colonists in their conflict with the mother country. Indirect aid was considered sufficient but, if there had been a possibility of Spain recovering its dependencies, no doubt direct assistance would have been given them.

⁴J. R. Poinsett, "Exposición de la conducta política de los Estados Unidos, para con las nuevas republicas de America." Mexico, 1827. In *Papeles varios*, 167, num. 4, pp. 5-7.

X

INFLUENCE OF EVENTS IN SPAIN

The unstable conditions in Spain during the Napoleonic invasions caused doubt and uncertainty in Mexico; also the attempts of the people to take charge of the government by means of juntas and the more liberal ideas of the Cortes were powerful examples for the colonies to exert their authority. When the people of New Spain were once aroused one event led to another until the revolution broke out.

Events in Spain had a tremendous influence upon the independence of the colonies. Great was the joy in Mexico which the fall of the hated Godoy and the proclaiming of the new monarch caused! The name of Ferdinand VII was repeated with gladness and everybody, both Europeans and Americans, seemed to be happy; many celebrations, dances, games, and cockfights were held in honor of the event. The tune was changed when news was received of the departure of the royal family for Bayona and the uprising of Madrid on May 2, 1808, but the Mexicans prepared to take an oath to the new king and await official confirmation. Then came the information of the abdication of the royal family, and it is difficult to describe the profound sensation of such news. This was the critical moment in which the seeds of disturbance began to be scattered; for the first time after three hundred years New Spain was without the direction of the metropolis. The renunciations at Bayona were regarded as acts of violence caused by Napoleon, who was greatly abhorred. What would be the fate of New Spain and what means should be taken in such an unusual case—those were the questions that were agitated everywhere and caused restlessness. Viceroy Iturrigaray was undecided about the conduct which should be observed in the

event and the situation was made more complicated because of the strong dislike that he had aroused. The royal acuerdo met and it was decided not to obey the orders of the duke of Berg, who had been appointed lieutenant-general of Spain, also to keep the kingdom in a state of defense and await the course of events. The audiencia proposed that a proclamation, stating that no foreign domination would be recognized, should be issued, but the viceroy said that it was not time for this. Nor was Iturrigaray disposed to accept what the council had proposed about the suspension of the very obnoxious measure for the alienation of pious estates.¹

When Napoleon proceeded to put his brother Joseph on the usurped Spanish throne he called a junta or gathering of Spanish notables and that junta became the signal for the Spanish patriots to summon others, thus came about the remarkable movement known as "the Spanish juntas." The members of those groups asserted their right to govern Spain, they made treaties with England, declared war against Napoleon, assumed control of the American colonies, demanded liberal concessions from Ferdinand as a condition of his restoration to the Spanish throne, and uttered ideas of French revolutionists relative to the rights of man. Gradually the example and ideas of those juntas of the peninsula influenced the distant dependencies.² The news of the uprisings in Spain against Napoleon caused universal enthusiasm in Mexico and in all parts people proclaimed Ferdinand VII king and swore to defend him until death. His portraits were brought out and in long processions Europeans walked at the side of Americans. The archbishop and ecclesiastical chapter of the capital were the first to offer all the possessions and revenues of the church for his cause and many other corporations and individuals followed their example. Alamán said that the viceroy and the *licenciados* Juan Francisco Azcárate and José Primo Verdad, who directed the ayuntamiento, be-

¹Alamán, I, 163-167.

²Winton, *Mexico Past and Present*, 63-64.

lieved that Spain could not resist the French; the viceroy indiscreetly showed this in his conversations, hence he gave little support to the demonstrations of joy by the people.³

The ayuntamiento of Mexico City took the initiative in the state of restlessness in order to calm the anxieties of the people of the capital. It met on July 15 and declared its loyalty to Ferdinand and that it would not recognize Napoleon or any other member of his family. It drew up a resolution and on the 19th, in the afternoon the members of the organization went to the viceregal palace in coaches surrounded by many people and they made military salutes when entering and coming out, contrary to the established custom. They were received by the viceroy to whom they gave the representation which was agreed upon. In it astonishment was expressed because of the renunciation of the royal family and it was said that, in the absence or incapacity of the legitimate heirs, the sovereignty which they represented resided in all the kingdom and its people, particularly in the superior tribunals, which should keep that sovereignty and return it intact to the sovereign when he was free from foreign oppression. Since the ayuntamiento of the capital represented all the other organizations of the kingdom, it would sustain at all costs the sovereignty of the monarch; meanwhile the colony should be governed by the established laws.⁴ Azcárate, the regidor, a man of great learning and instruction in political matters, believed that a supreme provisional government should be formed and be headed by the viceroy. He easily convinced the ambitious Iturrigaray of this and won over Verdad to the idea;⁵ therefore the viceroy was asked to go on governing the kingdom provisionally, and not submit to any power, not even to Spain itself while it was under French domination. Iturrigaray asserted that he had the same desires and would shed the last drop of blood in defense of such a just cause and that he was ready to take an oath for the security of the

³*Historia de Méjico*, I, 176, 181.

⁴*Alamán*, I, 167-168.

⁵*Riva Palacio*, III, 40.

country. He passed the representation of the ayuntamiento with the advice of his council on the same day that he had received it.⁶

The ayuntamiento lamented the fate of the royal family and expressed the most profound sentiments of love and loyalty to the king and the prince of Asturias. The members said that they were willing to sacrifice their persons and their wealth for the legitimate kings of Spain and to protect Mexico.⁷ They thought that Ferdinand was a young prince whose heart was full of virtue and who was the hope of the nation; therefore the viceroy was advised to carry on secret negotiations to ransom him and might offer 6,000,000 pesos to the commandant of the fortress where he was kept to let him go to Vienna and from there to England; if necessary he should give England another similar amount for the liberty of the prince. It was believed that this could easily be done because there was a scarcity of money in France.⁸ Later in the month when it was announced that Ferdinand VII was king of Spain there was great rejoicing everywhere. "Vivas" for Ferdinand were heard on all sides and at the same time shouts of "Death to the emperor of the French."⁹

The judges of the audiencia were very angry because of the part played by the ayuntamiento in representing the country and that tribunal next appeared on the scene. Almost all of the five members of the ayuntamiento were Americans who had inherited their offices from their fathers; consequently the acuerdo and the audiencia, composed mostly of Europeans, suspected that the municipal council concealed aspirations of independence.¹⁰ The *alcalde*

⁶Alamán, I, 168-170; Genaro García, *El plan de independencia de la Nueva España en 1808*.

⁷"Acta del ayuntamiento de México. . ." In Hernández y Dávalos, I, 475-480.

⁸"Representación del síndico del comun, proponiendo se ofrezcan doce millones de pesos por la libertad de Fernando VII." In Hernández y Dávalos, I, 489-490.

⁹"Documentos relativos a la proclamación de Fernando VII como rey de España." *Ibid.*, I, 495-496.

¹⁰Riva Palacio, III, 41-42.

de corte, Villa Urrutia, suggested that by all means the infante Don Pedro should be summoned to govern Mexico as regent to avoid the germ of disunion, but his idea was not supported. The acuerdo also began to oppose the work of the ayuntamiento and decided to contest the advice of the executive. It thought that nothing should be changed but all officials should go on exercising their functions as when they had received the royal appointment. It advised that Iturrigaray should communicate to all the other viceroys, governors, and civil and ecclesiastical authorities in the Americas and the Philippines the determination of New Spain to support the rights of the house of Bourbon, in order that all of them might do likewise. The ayuntamiento returned to the palace in a body on July 23, so that the viceroy might let it know what the acuerdo thought about its resolution. The audiencia was jealous because the viceroy paid so much attention to that body and the Europeans began to suspect that it had designs of independence. On the other hand, the Americans believed they saw in the resistance of the acuerdo a plan to keep the Americas always united to Spain, no matter what the dynasty might be. Mistrust thus arose between both groups and parties were formed in the capital which tried to make proselytes in the provinces. The Americans sent the people of the intendancies copies of the resolution of the ayuntamiento and the Europeans circulated the opinions of the acuerdo.

The idea of calling a junta of all the kingdom, which Villa Urrutia had proposed to various members of the audiencia, was presented to the distant town councils.¹¹ The plan of certain influential individuals of the capital was to take advantage of the circumstances in which Spain was to cause independence but, as public opinion was not yet prepared for this, they had to work in a roundabout way by flattering the viceroy to obtain his support and for a national junta which could exercise sovereignty. The proposal to call a junta flattered the ambition of the viceroy and he

¹¹Alamán, I, 170-174.

believed that it would strengthen his authority, since he considered that its vote would be merely consultative as that of the *acuerdo*; hence the interests of the viceroy were united with the party which promoted the summoning of the junta. The judges of the *audiencia*, Aguirre and Batañer, became the chiefs of the European party and, when the purposes of the Mexican *ayuntamiento* were realized, they tried to subject the viceroyalty to any authority in the peninsula which had an appearance of legitimacy in order to prevent separation from Spain. Alamán said that this explained why the *ayuntamiento* of Vera Cruz, composed of Europeans, moved the calling of a national junta, and afterwards became the bitterest enemy of the viceroy when it understood his purposes. It seemed very likely that the councilmen of the capital would give Iturrigaray the throne in Mexico and it was reported that some individuals had called him José I and the vicereina allowed her servants to treat her like a queen.¹²

The junta is important as the beginning of the independence movement because of the ulterior designs connected with it. The *acuerdo* and the *audiencia* advised that it should not be called, but the viceroy insisted upon summoning it and fixed the date for August 9. The *audiencia* maintained that there was no need for a junta to organize a provisional government as the laws of the Indies provided for all cases like the present, since they gave the viceroys full power and that in difficult matters they could consult with their councils. The judges decided to attend the gathering, but under the protest that they would not be responsible for the bad results which might occur. The junta, consisting of eighty-two individuals, was held in the principal salon of the palace behind closed doors on the appointed day; it was noisy and disorganized. Such a large assembly was something entirely new in the country; the viceroy opened the session and declared that it was called for the defense of the kingdom. Verdad explained the need for the

¹²*Historia de Méjico*, I, 181, 183-184, 186-187.

establishment of a provisional government while the king was a captive and that in such a case it was necessary to have recourse to the people in whom sovereignty resided. He said that representatives from each province should come to the capital to help establish the government and that the body might serve the viceroy as a consultative junta. He proposed that the viceroy and the junta should proclaim and take an oath to Ferdinand VII, king of Spain and the Indies, and that they should swear not to recognize any other monarch. The archbishop suggested that the discussions should be reduced, but the viceroy rose and answered with anger that everybody had freedom to speak what he wished and if the junta seemed long to him he could go home. The judges all stood for the cause of the metropolis and the three fiscals attacked the pretensions of the ayuntamiento. Their central theme of discussion was that if none of the governments formed in Spain, although they were not authorized by Ferdinand, were recognized it would be the same as establishing independence. The viceroy expressed the fear that if the junta of Seville were obeyed it would remove him and the other officials; he said that, if it had been erected by Ferdinand, he would be ready to recognize it immediately. No formal vote was taken on any of the many matters treated in the junta, but it was approved by acclamation that Ferdinand VII should be proclaimed king and the permanence of all colonial authorities was declared.¹⁸

The result of the junta was announced by the viceroy on August 12 by a proclamation. He stated, "We have nothing to hope from any other power than that of our legitimate Catholic monarch Ferdinand VII." He said that no other juntas, which were not created by the king or his legitimate agents, would be obeyed. He called on the people to sustain the interests of the monarchy and even shed their blood if necessary. The Europeans, who were inclined to recog-

¹⁸ Alamán, I, 187, 192-196, 201-204; "Junta general celebrada en México el 9 de Agosto de 1808. . ." In Hernández y Dávalos, I, 513-514, 530, 617; Castillo Negrete, I, 94 et seq.

nize the junta of Seville, saw in those expressions of Iturrigaray his complicity with the intentions of the ayuntamiento, which believed that it was impossible to recognize any government while Napoleon was in Spain. The next day on the anniversary of the conquest by Cortés the oath was taken to Ferdinand VII and there were great celebrations everywhere.¹⁴ The work of the junta was received differently by the provincial authorities. The intendant of Puebla, the count of Cadena, declared that the Indians resisted the payment of tribute since they had heard that there was no king. Intendant Riaño of Guanajuato also showed the evil effects which he believed the words of the viceroy's proclamation would produce and he said that the people of his province wanted a strict union to be kept with the Spanish juntas. The audiencia of Guadalajara thought that the work of the junta was null and that any junta would cause serious consequences; thus the measure by which the executive hoped to unite all opinions had the contrary effect.

Every day mistrust increased in the capital and the Europeans, believing themselves in danger, began to collect munitions; there was the same agitation among the Europeans of Vera Cruz, Zacatecas, and other places.¹⁵ Under those conditions on August 30, 1808, two individuals, Colonel Manuel de Jaúrequi, brother of the vicereina, and Captain Juan Gabriel Javat, presented themselves in the capital and said that they were commissioned by the junta of Seville to get New Spain to recognize that body and to ask for all the funds possible. They had power even to arrest the viceroy if he resisted their request. Javat was an enemy of Iturrigaray because he forced him to go to Spain two years before for demanding certain remunerations. The viceroy told the gentlemen that the colony had decided to sustain the cause of the Spanish nation and aid the metropolis as much as possible, but it could not recognize the junta of Seville or any other which was not created by Ferdinand

¹⁴"Proclama del virey D. José Iturrigaray á la union para resistir Napoleon." In Hernández y Dávalos, I, 527-529; Alamán, I, 208-210.

¹⁵Alamán, I, 212-214.

VII. He also said that he would give account to the audiencia and would summon a junta which would provide what was fitting. Another Mexican junta met on August 31 in the palace to deliberate whether the junta of Seville should be recognized. Many different opinions were expressed on the subject; the judge Aguirre voted that the body should be recognized in finance and war only and others asked the viceroy to submit the matter to his council. The acuerdo stated that there was no urgent need to recognize the superiority of the junta of Seville, since they had sworn not to obey any authority except that of the Bourbon dynasty; therefore after a long and bitter discussion it was decided not to give allegiance to the junta of Seville.¹⁰ On the night of the same day the viceroy received from Jamaica letters from commissioners of the junta of Asturias, formed at Oviedo, who were in London seeking aid to continue the war against France.

The next day a third junta was called to consider the letters and the viceroy said to the audiencia, "Spain is in anarchy, all are supreme juntas, and thus none should be obeyed." It was agreed not to do anything in the matter until other notices were received. On this occasion the fiscal, Borbon, said that supreme authority resided in the viceroy who replied, "Then gentlemen, I am governor and captain-general of the kingdom, each one of your Excellencies may keep your place, and do not think it strange if I take measures with some." The judges, Aguirre and Bataller, thought that the threats of the viceroy were aimed at them and they considered themselves lost if they did not prevent the execution of his plan. On the same day an order was directed to the capitals of the provinces to appoint representatives to a general junta to be held in the capital on September 9. Then the Europeans and judges were convinced that there was no other means but to resort to extreme measures. The

¹⁰Voto de D. José de Villa Urrutia dado en la junta general celebrada en México en 31 de Agosto de 1808. . ." *In* Hernández y Dávalos, I, 534-535; Alamán, I, 215-216.

commissioner Javat joined them and worked against his old enemy, the viceroy.¹⁷

It had been agreed in the Mexican juntas to aid Spain financially without recognizing the juntas of the peninsula, therefore the viceroy sent 100,000 pesos to Seville, prepared to transmit 2,000,000 pesos on the ship *San Justo*, and asked for gifts from all the viceroyalty. Large sums were collected from the corporations and wealthy individuals and the tribunal of mining gave one hundred cannon for the defense of the kingdom. There was some doubt about the election of deputies to the congress for all New Spain and again the acuerdo asked the viceroy not to summon it. Iturrigaray then pretended that he wanted to resign on account of the opposition and the acuerdo would have accepted his resignation gladly, but the ayuntamiento entreated him not to do it until the reasons for it were examined in a junta. Another junta was held, in which an extract of the votes of the two former meetings was read and the summoning of a general junta was discussed. Some said that only the king could call such a body because the laws prohibited reunions, even those of brotherhoods and other pious corporations without royal permission, and there was no need of juntas in America, since too much danger might arise from them. Others defended them, and finally the archbishop said, "If discussion of juntas only produces this division of the kingdom, what shall happen when they are realized?" He declared that he was opposed to the gathering of congresses. The meeting ended without anything definite having been accomplished, it only showed the great discrepancy of opinions, even among those who favored the juntas.¹⁸

Small popular juntas were convened in the larger towns of the provinces as a result of the agitation for a general junta. Groups of people, agog with excitement, collected on the street corners and in the houses of the alcaldes where they expressed different ideas; some asked for independence

¹⁷Castillo Negrete, *México en el siglo XIX*, 102-105; Alamán, I, 219-221; Hernández y Dávalos, I, 621.

¹⁸Alamán, I, 222-229, 231; Hernández y Dávalos, I, 621-622.

and that Iturrigaray be sovereign, and others supported Ferdinand VII. In those popular gatherings some declared the ruin of the viceroyalty and others believed that religion would be next. The municipal bodies of Vera Cruz and Querétaro enthusiastically offered to send representatives to the general junta which would be called to show their fidelity to the legitimate monarch. Jalapa inspired the uncertain conduct of the viceroy when it declared that the people were faithful to him and were willing to obey his orders. Riva Palacio said that from this the idea arose that Iturrigaray was ambitious for the crown of New Spain.¹⁹

Viceroy Iturrigaray was criticized more and more and he was in the midst of two parties without a definite plan of conduct. All his measures, his appointments, and practically everything that he tried to do were cited as examples of the sovereign power that he began to exercise and as steps toward the throne which he was trying to mount. It was said that the judges who had opposed the viceroy would be removed and the councilmen, Azcárate and Verdad, would replace them, and that he would not send any more money to Spain but use it in the colony.²⁰ The most absurd rumors were spread by the citizens who gathered in the towns to comment on the events of Spain.²¹ There were better founded causes for fear, since the executive caused the infantry regiment of Celaya to come to the capital and this hastened the violent means which the Europeans planned to take against him. All the Spaniards in Mexico saw clearly that the calling of the congress by the viceroy would end the Spanish domination in that country and that Iturrigaray favored the plan for independence by that means, therefore the time seemed propitious for a sudden and decisive blow. They decided that Gabriel de Yermo would make a good leader. He was a native of Vizcaya, of mature age, and was respected for his conduct and for

¹⁹*México á través de los siglos*, III, 42-43.

²⁰Alamán, I, 233-234.

²¹Riva Palacio, III, 42.

the great wealth that he had received from his wife and which he had increased by his industry. He had much influence in Cuernavaca where he had extensive estates. When his aid was sought he declared that "he was well aware that New Spain would be ruined unless a sudden remedy were applied," but he did not want blood to be shed. When Yermo once made up his mind all his energy was directed to carry out the measures decided upon and he hurried when the viceroy collected troops in the capital. The plan of the conspirators was to win over the officials of the commercial regiment that guarded the palace, which was composed mostly of Europeans, and imprison the viceroy and his family. The archbishop and his cousin, the inquisitor Alfaro, the judges of the audiencia, the merchants, and Spanish landowners knew of this plan. They acted in harmony with the merchants of Vera Cruz and the captain of artillery, Manuel Gil de la Torre, came to the capital; also the commissioner Javat from Seville was one of the most ardent promoters of the conspiracy. The viceroy received rumors of the plot, but did not believe them. The guard was won over to the cause and the final date for the event was set for September 15.²²

The conspirators began to assemble at half past eleven in the evening and an hour later five or six hundred men silently took their places in the sheltered portals of the flower market in front of the palace. Iturrigaray and the vicereina returned late from the theater; the executive was still unsuspecting when his wife remarked that there were many people in the flower markets. The plotters entered the palace easily and found their way to the viceroy's apartment. Iturrigaray exclaimed with surprise, "Gentlemen, what is this?" They answered, "To arrest you." He asked, "By whose order?" They responded, "By order of the king as a traitor to religion, to the country, and to our sovereign Ferdinand VII." Then his clothes were brought to him, he dressed himself, handed over the keys of the cabinet

²²Alamán, I, 233-237, 243-244, 246.

where his papers were kept, and was taken in a coach with his two oldest sons to the palace of the Inquisition where they remained under guard until daylight. Then they were conducted to the Bethlehemite convent and kept there until the 21st, when they were taken to Vera Cruz to the bleak fortress of San Juan de Ulloa to be embarked for Spain. The vicereina, her two small children, and her brother Jaúrequi were escorted to the nunnery of San Bernardo near the palace where they remained until their departure for Vera Cruz.²³

The new government was organized by six o'clock in the morning of September 16; the conspirators went to the hall of the viceroy's council, declared Iturrigaray deposed, proclaimed the field marshal, Pedro de Garibay, viceroy, and imprisoned the regidores Verdad and Azcárate. At ten o'clock the people heard about the imprisonment of Iturrigaray and at five o'clock a proclamation, which said that everything was done in the name of Ferdinand VII, was issued. The new executive began to exercise his functions immediately and Yermo declared that his work was finished.²⁴ The European residents in New Spain believed that Iturrigaray would be severely punished, but great was their surprise and indignation when they saw the leniency with which he was treated by the Spanish regency and the Cortes. The imprisonment of Iturrigaray has been regarded by some Mexicans as the first cause of the revolution and by the Spaniards as the only thing that avoided it, for the congress which he had called never met.²⁵ José María Bethancourt said that the revolution began with the violent and scandalous imprisonment of Iturrigaray, that he gave proof of his adhesion to the monarch and was a true lover of his country, that the juntas promoted all

²³Hernández y Dávalos, I, 660-663, 603-605; Alamán, I, 247-249. When Iturrigaray arrived in Spain he was imprisoned in the fortress of San Sebastian and from there was transferred to that of Santa Catalina. *Ibid.*, I, 261.

²⁴Hernández y Dávalos, I, 664; Alamán, I, 249-250. Verdad died in prison, but Alzárate was freed in 1811. *Ibid.*, I, 255-256.

²⁵*Ibid.*, I, 268, 270-271.

recognized Ferdinand VII as sovereign, that it was false to regard him as a traitor who wished to put himself on the throne, and that it was a crime to touch the sacred person of a viceroy to imprison him.²⁶ Alamán believed that Iturrigaray did not think that there would be any risk in calling a congress, since it would have been composed mostly of Spaniards; yet there were many documents to prove that those who promoted the national junta intended to bring about independence. He added that if the congress had met it likely would have been declared sovereign as was done later in Buenos Aires, Santa Fé, and Caracas.²⁷

The germ of revolution in Mexico continued in spite of the imprisonment of Iturrigaray, which had checked it for the moment. After the first surprise was over the Americans again took courage and the quarrels of the two parties increased. The progress of the French arms in Spain dampened the spirits of the Spaniards in America; some began to fear that all was lost and the creoles were interested in spreading the gloomy view as an argument in favor of independence. Abad Queipo said that the people of Mexico clamored for the punishment of certain officials of the army of Blake because of its flight, since they believed that every military coward was a traitor and every valiant soldier was a benefit to the country.²⁸ The inhabitants of Mexico eagerly awaited the results of the war of the metropolis. The idea of independence began to present itself to their minds more and more and they commenced to applaud and exaggerate the reverses of the Spanish arms. It was necessary to resort to severe measures, therefore a consultative junta, composed of three judges of the audiencia, was established in 1809 to deal with such matters.²⁹ Orders were given to patrol the portals of the flower market and the other mar-

²⁶ "Breves reflexiones que pueden añadirse . . . al quaderno titulado: verdadero origen, caracter, causas, resortes, fines y progresos de la revolución de N. E. . ." Mexico, 1821. In *Papeles varios*, 36, num. 70, pp. 2-3.

²⁷ Alamán, I, 272-273.

²⁸ Queipo al rey. Valladolid, Sept. 6, 1809, AGI, 2383 (95-4-10). Audiencia de Méjico.

²⁹ Alamán, I, 294.

kets every two hours from ten o'clock to dawn; any persons who carried weapons were to be arrested and all assemblies of men were to be prevented after eleven o'clock in the evening.⁸⁰

All kinds of exaggerated rumors continued to come to Mexico and they could not help but agitate the people. It was reported that Napoleon was going to send Charles IV to the colony to reign there and would divide the monarchy. The viceroy took the necessary measures in case the old king should present himself on the coasts; he gave orders that the monarch was not to be permitted to disembark and was to be arrested. About the same time on March 13, 1809, an English boat brought letters for the audiencias, governors, and ayuntamientos from the infanta Carlota Joaquina, sister of Ferdinand VII, a resident in Rio de Janeiro, asking that she should be made regent and her son Don Pedro lieutenant of the kingdom. The viceroy and the acuerdo considered those communications dangerous and the former prepared to take some defensive provisions.⁸¹

The eddying currents of Spain were reflected in Mexico and again complicated matters, for after the war with Austria in 1809 Napoleon increased the French force in the peninsula and the central junta of Seville had to withdraw to the island of León. The members of the junta could not agree and were divided, but at the last moment a regency of five members was created and the nation was saved from anarchy. The news of the events in the mother country caused the revolutions in Buenos Aires, Caracas, and Santa Fé where juntas, called by the viceroys and Spanish authorities, were established to govern during the absence of Ferdinand VII. Those Spanish officials were soon deposed and independence was declared in the same manner that it was believed Mexico tried to do it under Iturrigaray. When New Spain learned of those events it believed the cause of

⁸⁰"Orden de la plaza de 3 de Noviembre de 1809, para vigilar el perímetro de la plaza y disolver reuniones de gente que pasen de seis individuos." In Hernández y Dávalos, I, 715-716.

⁸¹Alamán, I, 298-300; Cavo, *op. cit.*, III, 261-262.

Spain lost and the archbishop and judges of the audiencia discussed the plan to invite the infanta Carlota Joaquina to be regent during the absence of her brother Ferdinand and to allow her to govern Mexico; however the news of the creation of the Spanish regency prevented this design from being put into effect. The regency was solemnly recognized, but it was soon superceded by a popularly chosen junta composed largely of merchants related to those in Mexico.⁸² The bishop of Puebla, Manuel Ignacio, declared that this junta, even before it was realized, was desired by the Mexican people, and when established it was an object of the greatest satisfaction.⁸³ The archbishop, ecclesiastical cabillos, priests, and members of the religious orders of the capital took an oath to the supreme central gubernatorial junta of Spain and the Indies as the depositor of the sovereign authority of Ferdinand VII until he could be restored to the throne.⁸⁴ The viceroy also provided for the rest of the people of the capital and the other cities of the kingdom to do likewise; he himself took the oath and the judges of the audiencia followed his example.⁸⁵

The new Spanish government, imbued with some liberal ideas, did introduce a few reforms into the colonies in order to make the people more satisfied with their conditions. The council of regency declared that the American colonies might send representatives to the Cortes of Spain. The Indians also were to take part in the election of deputies as well as the sons of Spaniards; all were to be represented in the Cortes as true Spanish Americans and their rights were to be guaranteed.⁸⁶ The tribunal of the consulado of Mexico City maintained nevertheless that the natives were

⁸²Alamán, I, 322-327.

⁸³Manuel Ignacio, obispo de Puebla al Sor. Don Antonio Porcel. Puebla, March 18, 1809, AGI, 1819 (92-1-5). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁸⁴Arzobispo de Mexico al Señor Don Antonio Porcel. Mexico, April 10, 1809, *ibid.*

⁸⁵Pedro Garibay al Señor D. Antonio Porcel. Mexico, May 12, 1809, num. 17, *ibid.*

⁸⁶"Decreto adicionada al de 14 de Febrero de 1810, para que los indios puedan elegir representantes á las cortes del reyno." In Hernández y Dávalos, II, 307.

not capable of this since their ideas were not well developed, they were not patriotic and knew nothing of politics and the government did not count with them, they only asked the public authorities for an indulgent priest and a lazy subdelegate, and they paid little attention to the succession of intendants, viceroys, monarchs, or the nation in general. They lived in indolence according to their inclinations and were full of vice. The body of merchants said that the Indians did not have any of the characteristics or dignity of citizens or any of the qualifications of vassals; the creoles were vain and haughty only dreaming of independence, therefore most of the people would not make good representatives in the Cortes.⁸⁷

The Cortes decreed that the Spanish dominions in both hemispheres formed one and the same monarchy, one and the same nation, only one family, and that the natives who were the original inhabitants of the overseas dominions were equal in rights to those of the peninsula.⁸⁸ Another decree provided that the Americans, the Indians, and their children, as well as the Spaniards, should have equal opportunity to hold any ecclesiastical, political or military office of the monarchy.⁸⁹ The protomedicato was reformed by the Cortes which arranged that the board of physicians should be composed of two professors of pharmacy, two of medicine, two of surgery, and one of chemistry; the council of regency was to make the new appointments immediately.⁹⁰ This had been asked for earlier and thus another wish of the Mexicans came true. For the sake of reform, all public employees, civil or military, were to be removed in Mexico three days after the decree of the Cortes of

⁸⁷"Informe del real tribunal del consulado de México sobre la incapacidad de los habitantes de N. E. para nombrar representantes á las Cortes." *In* Hernández y Dávalos, II, 458-459, 461-463.

⁸⁸Decreto de las Cortes. Real isla de León, Oct. 15, 1810, AGI, 1146 (88-1-9). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁸⁹Decreto declarando iguales derechos á los Americanos que los que gozan los europeos. Feb. 9, 1811. *In* Hernández y Dávalos, II, 378.

⁹⁰Decreto de las Cortes. Cádiz, Sept. 22, 1811, AGI, 1234 (88-5-9). Audiencia de Méjico.

November 11, 1811, was received and the council of regency was to appoint others to take their places.⁴¹

The *mitas* and repartimientos of Indians and all personal service were abolished on November 13, 1812, since the general Cortes desired to remove the obstacles which hindered the use and exercise of the civil liberty of the overseas possessions and wished to promote all the means for the encouragement of agriculture, industry, and the increase of the population of those vast provinces. The natives were exempted from personal services to priests to whom they paid parochial dues and were not to be used to construct roads or public buildings. The lands were to be distributed to married Indians or those over twenty-five years of age, and in all colleges where scholarships existed some were to be given to Indians.⁴² The burdensome tobacco monopoly was likewise extinguished in all the provinces of the monarchy in both worlds; henceforth the cultivation, manufacture, and sale of tobacco was to be free in Spain and America. Commerce in the product was to be free everywhere, dues were not to be demanded on it in the custom-houses of the interior, and it might be sent freely to foreign countries.⁴³

The people of Mexico had complained of the high contributions, therefore on March 4, 1814, the Cortes declared that, in consideration of the exorbitant burdens of the provinces, it wished to aid them in some way in order that it might be easier for them to fulfil their obligations. It was decreed that instead of the sixteen per cent which the community funds paid for different public objects, henceforth they should only contribute ten per cent to such works. Viceroy Calleja gave orders for the measure to be put into effect in all the cities and towns of New Spain.⁴⁴ A few days

⁴¹Decreto de las Cortes. Cádiz, Nov. 11, 1811, AGI, 1234 (88-5-9). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴²Decreto de la regencia. Cádiz, Nov. 13, 1812, AGI, 1236 (88-5-11). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴³Decreto de las Cortes. Madrid, Sept. 13, 1813, AGI, 1156 (88-1-20). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴⁴Félix Calleja, un bando reduciendo las contribuciones. Mexico, March 4, 1814. In *Matamoras Archives*, XV, p. 190. BL.

later the Cortes suppressed the dues on grain in the public granaries.⁴⁵

This shining shield had a reverse side, since much of the good work of the Cortes was undone later when the Constitution of 1812 was suppressed, whereupon the dissatisfaction of the Americans was greater than before. In 1814 the viceroy received copies of the *Gazeta de Madrid* which said that the captain-general should again assume the presidency of the audiencia, therefore Calleja issued a proclamation declaring that he would perform this function, since he feared that the direct orders for it had been usurped by pirates. He tried to restore the administration to its former condition, he commanded that the constitutional ayuntamientos should be dissolved, and he restored the judicial tribunals which had been abolished by the so-called constitution and the decrees of the Cortes. He took pride in admitting that the government was what it had been in 1808, thus he clearly showed that he had learned nothing from the liberal reforms of the Cortes and was a man of the old régime.⁴⁶ Friar Pimental of Aguascalientes had no use for reforms, since he accused the Cortes of lack of piety and religion, of despotism and the desire to despoil the king of his sovereignty. He said that the Cortes prohibited any pious works and chaplaincies to be founded, it extinguished the religious orders, the Jesuits, and the Inquisition. The ecclesiastic maintained that on account of this the military chiefs rose with the troops to proclaim independence from the Cortes and its constitution; to preserve the dominions for the sovereign and to ask some members of the royal family to come to govern them was the motive of Iturbide and others when they proclaimed the independence of the kingdom.⁴⁷

⁴⁵Francisco López mandando un ejemplar de bando que suprime impuestos sobre granos. Aguayo, July 19, 1814. In *Matamoros Archives*, XV, p. 177. BL.

⁴⁶Félix María Calleja al Miguel de Lardizábal. Mexico, Dec. 31, 1814, num. 1, AGI, 1155 (88-1-19). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁴⁷Friar Nuriano López Bravo y Pimental al rey. Aguascalientes, July 5, 1821, AGI, 1680 (91-2-4). Audiencia de Méjico.

The desire for independence existed in Mexico among some people quite early, long before the violent events suffered by the crown of Spain. As early as 1765 it was reported that two men who declared themselves to be Mexicans were in Madrid and they said that all the citizens of New Spain were determined to throw off the Spanish yoke; that the descendants of the conquerors and the creoles were badly treated, therefore because of their neglect they refused to recognize their own families in Spain; and that they had come to the court as representatives of the people. The two men went to the court, which would not listen to them, and they were told to keep quiet if they did not want to be punished for sedition. At the inn where they lodged the story was spread that they were determined to throw off the Spanish yoke, that the uprising would be general, that it would be necessary to form a plan of administration, that the government would not be a monarchy, and that the ports would be opened to all foreign nations.⁴⁸ In 1785 a certain creole by the name of Foncecerra in the town of Valladolid, who became angered because the office of town councilman for which he applied was given to Calderón, a European, expressed himself boldly against the gachupines and the authority and rights of the king, however he was unable to stir up a revolution at that time.⁴⁹ Two years later Josef de Santa Gertrudis y Cárdenas of Puebla said that some people upheld the right of the ancient seigniorship in Mexico and on many occasions tried to establish it and take away from the crown of Spain its most precious jewel, America. They compared the colony to a hired vineyard which only existed for the imposition of excessive dues and used many other expressions which showed disrespect to the sovereign and his ministers.⁵⁰

Among the papers relative to the case against Joseph Guerrero and his associates, the presbiter Juan Vara, An-

⁴⁸Plan de independencia de México en 1765. In Hernández y Dávalos, II, 620-621.

⁴⁹Alamán, I, 124.

⁵⁰Fray Joseph de Santa Gertrudis y Cárdenas a Floridablanca. Puebla, Oct. 28, 1787, AGI, 1879 (92-4-3). Audiencia de Méjico.

tonio de los Reyes, Josef Rodríguez Valencia, and Mariano de la Torre, it was found that a project was conceived for an uprising in the kingdom.⁶¹ It was said that the desire for independence existed from the time that Humboldt visited New Spain in 1803, but Juan López Cancelada said that the celebrated traveler did not go eighty-eight leagues from the capital and could not know whether the majority of the people wanted it. Cancelada, who had lived in some large cities, who held various commissions from the king, and who was a merchant, laborer, and miner, declared that he never heard a word about independence. In the period of the French Revolution he had examined the correspondence of the French with the Spanish and he avowed that in none of it did he find independence mentioned.⁶² Julián Castillejos showed clearly how the events in Spain crystallized the wish for independence when he said,

"Inhabitants of America . . . the valiant Spanish soldiers have not been able to resist the superior forces of the tyrant Napoleon, who according to the last notices were in the neighborhood of Madrid. All Spain on account of the fatal misfortune groans under his yoke. Open your eyes and know the terrible evils which threaten you, if you do not prepare now against them. . . Make one body, show that you are faithful to the king and are true defenders of the holy religion and of the country. Proclaim the independence of New Spain in order to keep it for our august and loved Ferdinand VII. . ."

He also asked for the formation of a junta which would represent the nation.⁶³

The cruel reaction which followed the restoration of Ferdinand to the throne shook Mexico from center to circumference, making the Americans more determined to win

⁶¹Francisco Cerdá al Francisco de Saavedra. Madrid, June 26, 1798, num. 9, AGI, 1781 (91-6-16). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁶²Juan López Cancelada. "La verdad sabida y buena fé guardada. . ." Cádiz, 1811. In *Papeles varios*, 215, num. 3, p. IX-XI.

⁶³"Extracto de la causa instruida contra el licenciado D. Julián Castillejos por haber tratado de independer á la Nueva España. . . Feb. 5, 1809 to April 25, 1812. In García, *Documentos históricos Mexicanos*, I, 101-102.

independence and to separate from Spain. At first there was great joy and many people believed that all the evils in Mexico would cease. Ferdinand had solemnly sworn to uphold the Constitution of 1812 and hypocritically announced to the overseas colonists that he did it spontaneously because it was the common vote of the nation and because he wanted to elevate Spain to a high place among other nations of the world. He said that Spain presented to Europe an admirable spectacle due only to its constitutional system, that the state which was vascillating had been consolidated on the robust bases of liberty and public credit, and that the new institutions would give favorable and permanent results and would stimulate desires for other innovations. He entreated the people to swear to the constitution made by them for their joy and assured them that it had not cost him any sacrifice to recognize it when he was convinced that it would produce their happiness.⁶⁴ But after further consideration it was learned that the treaty made with France contained various articles against the Constitution of 1812 and others that would cause the breaking of the alliance with Great Britain. There was reason to believe that Ferdinand would not support the regency which sustained the Constitution because he had to obey the provisions of his treaty of peace and if he did not uphold it Napoleon would, thus strife would result between the king and the Cortes. If that happened what party would the American gachupines favor, that of the monarchy or the Cortes? If they took the side of the monarchy it would be the same as declaring Napoleonism, the Constitution would be ended, and those who had supported it would be considered felons. If they took the part of the Cortes Napoleon would stop this since he had Ferdinand under his power. The Americans therefore feared that the gachupines would uphold absolutism because it was the only

⁶⁴El rey a los habitantes de ultramar. 1814, AGI, 146-1-15. Indiferente General de Nueva España.

language that they understood.⁵⁵ Dr. José María Cos, the Mexican revolutionist, said that the restoration of Ferdinand to the throne with the aid of French troops was the worst thing that could have happened to Spain, but it was a very favorable event for the independence of America, since England would sustain the party of the Cortes, which supported the alliance with Spain, in order to guarantee the payment of the debt which Spain had contracted for the war with France; that nation would also favor free commerce with the Americas and the American party against the Spaniards.⁵⁶

The news soon reached Mexico that Ferdinand had declared null and of no effect the Cortes and all the governments in the time of his absence, that he classified the deputies as heretics and traitors, and that he sentenced them to prison and to death. Cos argued that if the Cortes and all the governments were null and the ministers delinquents as Ferdinand assured the people, the Americans who had revolted were not rebels and heretics but faithful defenders of religion and the country and for that reason were worthy of the greatest rewards. Then Venegas, Calleja, and the gachupines would be the true traitors, thieves, and assassins on account of having shed the blood of the innocent. He said that if, on the other hand, the government of the Cortes was legitimate, Ferdinand VII, who decreed despotically its extermination, should not be recognized as king; then also the war of the Americans would be just and should continue against the oppressors.⁵⁷

The foregoing account has shown that events in the peninsula revealed the weakness of the Spanish monarchy and hastened the insurrection in America. The colonists protested against the projects of Napoleon to control their mother country and did not wish to submit to Spain if it were dominated by a foreign power. At the same time en-

⁵⁵Contestación del Sor. Torres a la carta de Negrete. Mexico, July 13, 1814, AGI, 2571 (96-4-26). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁵⁶Aviso al publico de José María Cos. July 14, 1814, AGI, 2571 (96-4-26). Audiencia de Méjico.

⁵⁷Bando de Cos. Sept. 1, 1814, *ibid.*

thusiastic loyalty to Ferdinand VII was expressed and it was declared to be the duty of Americans to remain faithful to him and to use their power to restore him to the throne.

A considerable impulse toward independence was received from Spain when juntas were formed there, also when the nation undertook the task of the preservation of sovereign power and assumed administrative functions. A constituent congress was assembled and for the first time representatives of the colonies helped to participate in the exercise of national powers and they assumed the task with great enthusiasm. The juntas in Spain suggested the creation of similar bodies in America and at first Viceroy Iturrigaray upheld them because he thought that they were working entirely for the interests of Spain and Ferdinand against the French. But it soon appeared that the juntas had many things in view besides the replacing of Ferdinand VII on the throne and, when their intentions relative to reforms, popular government, and the like became known, the viceroy found himself between two fires. Much dissension occurred in Mexico over the subject of recognition of the juntas of Spain; the ayuntamiento flatly refused to have anything to do with them, while the audiencia, which had become suspicious of the councilmen and the viceroy, thought that any legitimate authority in Spain should be recognized. Some even suggested that it would be a good thing if Ferdinand would come to Mexico, however the plan never materialized due to the great confusion and uncertainty in the country. Meanwhile the viceroy, who tried to carry water on both shoulders and please both parties, was imprisoned and sent to Spain by the royalists since it was feared that he was plotting for independence. For a time he was replaced by temporary substitutes until 1810 when Venegas, duly authorized by the central junta, took command of the gloomy situation. The desire for independence grew stronger and stronger and the question was not whether Mexico should be on the side of Ferdinand or of the Spanish junta, but whether it should or should not break

all connections with Spain. The cruel and reactionary policy of Ferdinand, who had learned nothing from his exile and the signs of the times, crystallized that desire and the insurgents determined to win independence at any cost rather than be subject to all the errors and oppressions of the old régime.

CONCLUSION

The rigorous class distinction in New Spain between gachupines, creoles, mestizos, castes, negroes, foreigners, and Indians caused lack of progress, mistrust, jealousy, and hatred, helped to loosen the bonds of society, and was a decided motive for revolution. The creole group, far removed from the mother country and under liberal frontier conditions, advanced more rapidly than the other classes. It had obtained new viewpoints on practically all subjects which Spain did not appreciate. The spirit of the creole which was to advocate insurrection manifested itself by wishing to set aside restrictions on printing, by declaring freedom of the press; it demanded provision for schools where they did not exist and more facilities for the education of women. It aimed to have justice administered impartially and efficiently, to have the ports flung open to trade with other countries besides Spain, to remove all limitations on certain kinds of production, to abolish slavery and titles of nobility, and to have all citizens regarded as equal before the law.

The Spanish administration could not read the signs of the times and did not know that a change had taken place in the colonies, therefore it persisted in the maintenance of the old policy of cleavage between classes, of privilege, of unjust discrimination, and the exclusion of creoles, mestizos, and Indians from participation in social and political control. As in China the past with all its conservative ideas was taken for a guide and this caused hostility on the part of the more up-to-date inhabitants. In time the group of the population which was animated by progressive ideas laid the basis of a new society and, since Spain could not adapt itself to the changed conditions and needs of American society, it became restless and dissatisfied. Finally the number of creoles and mestizos born in Mexico exceeded

that of the Spanish immigrants and silently and steadily the progressive element prepared itself to prevail over the more conservative by the inauguration of the independence movement. The Indians, who had not advanced in spite of the many just laws in their favor, were to be used as pawns in the movement but, since the creole revolutionists could offer them more and their instinct had taught them to be hostile to those in authority who were their oppressors, they swelled the ranks of the insurgents and thus by their numbers helped them to win in the cause against Spanish domination. It was to be many long years however before they were to take their place in Mexican society on an equality with the other classes.

Decade after decade the freedom of intellectual life had been suppressed in Mexico by the Inquisition and the higher authorities who thought that it was better for the general mass of the people to be ignorant in order to keep them under subjection. Higher learning and new ideas were considered dangerous for the administration and bad for the spiritual welfare of most people; therefore only the bare essentials of education, which was mostly religious, were encouraged. Notwithstanding the many obstacles there was a gradual transformation in the colonial mind which cast aside Old World conventions and developed common sense. The kind of immigrants who came to America helped to bring about this change, for they were bold restless spirits who did not like to be told what to do or what to read. The lack of common ideas among all classes of people hindered real intellectual progress and the Spanish government or those in control in the colony would stand no criticism of their proceedings no matter how enlightened it might be. For a time a stereotyped kind of European culture, which approached all the excellencies of that of the Old World, flourished in Mexico, but gradually the colonists broadened their views and began to read secretly prohibited English and French literature for which they acquired a taste. The kind of culture that was permitted to be introduced into New Spain flourished and even surpassed that of Spain in

many ways. In the studies of mining, mineralogy, geology, botany, chemistry, and astronomy the colonists forged ahead of their friends in the peninsula, however their literary productions were not much of an improvement over those of the seventeenth century.

It was not until the writings of the French philosophers and all kinds of forbidden books were read that there was a noticeable change in colonial ideas. From the first the viceroys saw in those works the germ of revolution and employed absurd and irritating means to suppress them, but they were never entirely successful in the extermination of them in the dependencies, since many secret and unusual ways were found to put them into the hands of their admirers. The documents relative to the winning of independence in the United States were eagerly welcomed in the neighboring viceroyalty and the example of that republic caught the imagination of the young creoles, who also began to sustain ideas of independence, although they had no political training. The French Revolution was a period of great activity for the suppression of liberalism in Mexico, and the more harsh means that were applied, the more determined were the young creoles to defy them. French revolutionary writings continued to enter Mexico during the whole era and even the best people read them. As a result of the progressive ideas there was a more general desire for the promotion of education in Mexico. Many people asked to have schools established and some also pleaded earnestly for the instruction of the Indians which had been shamefully neglected. The fact that there was dissatisfaction with the old inefficient system of education, which prepared youths mostly for the church, showed that the country was slowly progressing in spite of the almost insurmountable obstacles imposed by the church, the Inquisition, and old-timers who did not believe in advanced learning. The medieval viewpoint gradually gave way to the modern and with it came ideas of liberalism which were adopted by the creole-mestizo element, which was not satisfied until an attempt was made to put them into effect and

that undertaking was to bear fruit in the revolution to cast off the Spanish yoke.

One of the basic defects of economic weakness was the colonial commercial policy with its mistaken ideas and false mercantile theories. At first commerce was a strict monopoly and could only be carried on by definite persons, in a determined quantity, and by certain ports; it was almost entirely controlled by Spaniards or foreigners and the creoles were excluded from its profits as they were from many other advantages in New Spain, and naturally they were dissatisfied with such a system. Other nations tried to break down the exclusive Spanish monopoly by illicit trade, it was impossible to keep them out of colonial ports, and they caused much injury to the treasury. Since they could manufacture articles cheaper than the Iberian Peninsula, foreign nations reaped the benefits from the gold of the Indies which they obtained in exchange for their numerous products. Commercial conditions gradually grew worse for Spain on account of the multitude of imposts and dues which were continually increased, and the monopolies became more hated when they were extended to almost all the articles of common necessity. The consulados through which commerce was carried on never had many progressive economic ideas and they usually worked for their own selfish interests. Some of the organizations of merchants became so aggressive that their abolition was seriously considered. The coastwise trade which would have greatly benefitted the individual provinces was prohibited and frequently it was impossible for distant places to obtain any Spanish merchandise, therefore they had to depend on contraband for all luxuries and even for the necessities of life. When the monopolistic system did not realize the benefits expected, trading companies were tried, but they too failed.

Commercial reforms had been advocated for some time, however they did not materialize until the reign of the great Bourbon king, Charles III, who abolished the most vexatious features of the old monopolistic system. Gradually the worst restrictions were removed, especially in

the distant frontier provinces, until 1778 when a period of limited free trade was inaugurated and the regulation was applied to all the colonies by 1789. Many good results were experienced from the famous Pragmatic of Free Commerce. The monopolies enjoyed by the consulado and great merchants were broken and small traders were given a chance; industrial life was quickened and there was relief for a short time from ruinous dues; internal commerce became more progressive in spite of bad roads and communication; the Philippine commerce became more profitable; national wealth increased every year and luxuries were more in demand; exports exceeded imports; the standard of living of the people was improved and the population grew; there was a complete break with the old commercial régime; and for the first time the inhabitants began to grow conscious of their economic powers. Like so many other laws, the wise regulation was soon violated, was not universally enforced, and it did not go far enough to remove all commercial restrictions. Other slight concessions were made to commerce later, but even they did not entirely meet colonial needs and did not stop smuggling which flourished as much as ever. There were still many petty restrictions and later old dues were imposed again to cause annoyance.

Under free trade Spanish commerce still could not compete successfully with that of foreign nations, since they had obtained advantage in the commercial game and they had more freedom than Spain, notwithstanding all its reforms. There were many advocates of further commercial reform but nothing was done for the wars of independence came too soon; they were too soon also to realize all the benefits of free commerce which received a setback at that time. The wise measure for free trade was a step in the right direction, although it did not realize all the advantages expected, since Spain could not keep pace with the increased production of other nations and with the great volume of international trade; neither could it provide its colonies with the goods and capital needed for their development. Yet with free commerce new progressive ideas entered the colonies;

they greatly aided the people to realize their economic deficiencies and helped to pave the way for independence. When the people became certain that nothing more could be expected from Spain and, after having experienced the benefits of free trade, they desired to shift for themselves and use their own powers to obtain economic advantages, but this could only be done by separating completely from the mother country.

It is but a commonplace to assert that industry was also unprogressive in the Spanish colonies under the mercantilistic theories, since only the branches which did not conflict with the interests of Spain were tolerated. Mining was always the most favored industry because the thirst for gold had an early start in the dependencies and it was the chief source of revenue for the government. The Spaniards were dazzled by the enormous quantities of gold and silver found and the ease with which it was first obtained caused mining methods to develop slowly. The errors in the control and distribution of the amalgamation metal, quicksilver, which was a government monopoly and came from Spain, greatly hindered the progress of mining, for when the supply was short that very important industry almost had to stop. Then too mining only benefitted the wealthy who amassed huge fortunes, while the laborers lived in the most abject poverty with little opportunity for advancement because of the greed of their employers.

Agriculture, the chief support of a nation, was subject to many restrictions, but fortunately they were never strictly enforced. Although vineyards were prohibited in Mexico because they might interfere with those in Spain, there were ways to get around the law. Tobacco, which could have been raised with profit in many localities, was only permitted in certain places since it too was a government monopoly. After silk raising was ruined when the king tightened up his agricultural restrictions, its reestablishment was considered, but it never prospered in Mexico again. On the whole agriculture was not as productive as it might have been in a country with such excellent soil and such wonder-

ful climate because it was obstructed by medieval methods, political regulations, and many vices of the feudal system which were transferred to New Spain. Only too often Mexico merely planted enough crops for its own consumption and did not try to make agriculture a profitable industry. Plans were proposed occasionally by certain economists for the reform of agriculture but they seldom materialized.

The system of land ownership, which was a survival of medievalism, kept agriculture unprogressive, since the owners of the large estates only cultivated small parts of them. The tithe and the alcabala were heavy burdens upon agriculture and were injurious to the farmers, for they were demanded in times of scarcity as well as in prosperity; many other harmful dues were imposed upon the important branch of industry and this made the cost of living for farmers high. Moreover the treatment of agricultural workers on large estates was not always what it should have been for their improvement. There were too many large proprietors for the good of the country and too many landless people; one of the chief aims of the revolutionists was to divide the lands for the promotion of agriculture. Cattle raising prospered on the large estates which were particularly adapted to it.

Manufacture was the most restricted and backward of all industries, for only such textiles and articles which could not compete with those of Spain were permitted. Yet it was impossible for the peninsula to furnish half of what was needed for the colonists and as a result they had to depend upon the illicit articles of foreign commerce. Some manufactures were established, especially in the interior of the country where it was very difficult to obtain foreign products and where they were very high in price, but they were not very successful because of the constant interruption of communication and lack of experience in industry. In war time there was a tendency to increase manufacture on account of sheer necessity and sometimes prohibited articles were made. The labor conditions of factories were

terrible in Mexico; only too often workshops were regarded as convenient places to send criminals and laborers were treated almost like slaves. Certain viceroys made effort to better conditions in the workshops and even admitted women to industry, however labor conditions did not improve as much as they should have for the good of the country and the benefit of laborers. Some far-seeing individuals stood for the development of home industries and industrial reform, but there was little knowledge of economics in New Spain and it was impossible to put their wise ideas into effect. The vascillating policies which were applied to industries for so long caused much discontent, for when they did get a good start in the country some foolish or contradictory measure checked their development. New economic ideas entered Mexico at the same time as the French philosophic ideas and the people began to realize their economic unprogressiveness. The spirit of the creole demanded innovations in this field as well as in many others and, when the desired economic reforms receded like a mirage, the bold creoles insisted upon separation from the mother country in order to get rid of all restrictions upon industry and to execute their own economic ideas.

Colonial finance was very stupidly administered and it was even more minutely regulated than commerce and industry. In a country where gold and silver abounded there was always a scarcity of ready money for circulation, notwithstanding the huge sums that were coined. Some of it was hoarded by the wealthy, but most of it flowed out of Mexico going to Spain in the form of loans and gifts and to foreign countries to pay for articles of commerce. The establishment of new mints did not remedy the condition, since it seemed that the more money coined the more rapidly it disappeared. Capital was also scarce in New Spain for all kinds of enterprises, although the revenues were enormous throughout the whole colonial period. The trouble was that the amounts collected from revenues were used in Spain and only enough money to meet the bare costs of administration was expended in the colony. Many nations had

exaggerated ideas of the wealth of Mexico which was really poor after its gold and silver left the country for the peninsula.

Many were the complaints about the payment of excessive dues and the difficulty of their collection; also numerous petitions which asked for the people to be relieved from them were sent to the king at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Financial reforms were only temporary and the evil conditions never failed to return. Delay and arrears in accounts became more frequent and the treasury was in a deplorable condition for a number of years before the insurrection of Hidalgo began. New and unusual dues had to be imposed and extraordinary methods used to meet the deficit of the treasury; some of them like the measure for the alienation of landed property of chaplaincies and Pious Funds caused great dissatisfaction. Throughout the entire colonial period voluntary and forced loans had been constantly employed to raise money for the king and his wars; finally the people grew tired of this, especially when the loans were never repaid. When the insurrection approached the financial burdens of the people increased by leaps and bounds, likewise the complaints about dues were augmented. As the revolution continued financial conditions in Mexico became hopeless and the expenses of the war could hardly be met. Whenever a government touches the pocketbook of a nation too hard there is bound to be malcontent. This is what happened in New Spain where even some of the most loyal and submissive people commenced to think that there should be a limit to their contributions. They grew weary of the unprogressive financial situation and the bolder spirits among them believed that they should manage their own finances for the good of Mexico and not for the benefit of Spain alone. Thus discontent with financial conditions was one of the strong factors in the independence movement.

In the church, the most powerful institution of Mexico, there were great inequalities among the members of the clergy as in other classes of society. The upper clergy con-

trolled everything, drew the high salaries, and profited by the wealth of the church. At the end of the eighteenth century the church in New Spain became very wealthy and then corruption crept into the venerable institution. Political administrators were covetous of the vast ecclesiastical riches, therefore measures were taken to reduce them and to prevent further accumulation. The church also exacted high dues from the people and they too became a source of dissatisfaction when priests used severe methods to collect them.

The corruption, abuses, and indifference of the clergy caused decreased respect for the church as an institution but not for religion. Irregularities and laxness among the members of the clergy preceded the movement for independence; there was a lack of obedience to prelates and some religious refused to live in dreary convents, looking for entertainment elsewhere. The instruction of the Indians was shamefully neglected and they lost their reverence for priests when they noticed their excesses. The rivalries between gachupines and creoles entered the sacred precincts of the church, and some of the irresponsible members of the clergy committed serious crimes. There were not sufficient positions in the church for all ecclesiastics, consequently some had to live in idleness and Satan seemed to find plenty of mischief to occupy them. There were still many good and sincere ecclesiastics, but they were apt to be overlooked on account of the conspicuous abuses of their less scrupulous brothers. As in Europe in the thirteenth century, there were controversies over the extent of jurisdiction of ecclesiastical courts and there was a tendency on the part of civil courts to check it until most of the authority of ecclesiastical tribunals was taken away.

The Inquisition, with its intolerant attitude and its attempt to keep liberal ideas out of Mexico for so many years, was a source of discontent among the people. It frequently exceeded the bounds of its jurisdiction and became arrogant toward the people and the government; by its terrorism it subdued the spirit of the common man

and deprived him of independence in thought and action, consequently the colonists greatly rejoiced when the hated institution was abolished in 1813 by a decree of the Cortes and it could no longer spread a blight over the intellectual life of the country. The activities of the Holy Office had engendered dislike among the inhabitants for the religious authorities of Mexico and that hostility was easily transferred to the political administration which had upheld the rigid religious system for so long.

When the church and the state acted together there was no danger of a movement for independence from the mother country, but the lower clergy, who particularly guided the people, became estranged since it was influenced by the spirit of the creole and the French philosophic writings. Friars therefore did not hesitate to conspire against Spain in their convents in spite of the threats of prelates and viceroys. It was impossible for the higher clergy to renounce their allegiance to the king, for they owed their offices, promotions, and privileges to him; consequently they were usually on the side of the royalists and conservatives. Four-fifths of the native clergy cast their lot with the revolutionists because of the intense hatred of the creoles for the gachupines. Later when the course of the revolution appeared to lead directly toward independence, regard for their worldly welfare caused many members of the higher clergy to show sympathy with the party that was destined to exercise power in the new state; thus the support of ecclesiastics shifted to the rebel group which had once been denounced.

The admirable Spanish colonial administration of the early days was later found to have many defects, since it could not adapt itself to the changing conditions of frontier life and society. The famous laws of the Indies which had served so well became out-of-date and lost their former effectiveness; delay and confusion in law enforcement was such a serious problem that jurists began to realize the need for a recodification of the laws of the Indies. The viceroys of the later colonial period were not the great and outstand-

ing personages as at first. Many of them were weak and governed the colony like strangers, who came to Mexico without knowing or loving it. The cumbersomeness of colonial administration continually increased and detracted from the efficiency of the government. It was impossible to put into effect the minute instructions of the mother country, which had a perfect mania for regulation, and procrastination, delay, and uncertainty became the rule for all officials. The viceroys were greatly overworked because almost everything was expected of them; the mere routine of their offices kept them occupied for many hours a day. The corruption of minor officials was notorious and loud were the complaints against it.

Under the Bourbon régime the badly needed reforms for America came at last when conditions were becoming unbearable. Two great political reforms marked the reign of the wise Charles III, the general visitation and the systematization of the colonies by erecting them into uniformly governed intendancies. The primary purpose of the new system of intendancies was to relieve the overworked viceroy and the intendants were expected to be real assistants to him. One of the chief aims of the reform was to make the revenues more ample through more efficient collection, for greater wealth was required to meet the military expenses of Spain in its international wars. Another innovation which affected the colonies was the division of the ministry of the Indies, but it is questionable whether the colonies were benefitted by it. The reforms of the great Bourbon monarch had many good results and the most glaring abuses were removed, however some of the reforms were only temporary and there was so much opposition to the intendant system from the first that it was difficult to administer. The intendants were not the unique individuals that were expected and they were never great men like the French intendants. The subdelegates were not much of an improvement over the old *alcaldes mayores*; sometimes they became blind tools of higher officials from whom they hoped to receive favors.

The non-observance of the laws was as great a problem after the intendancies were inaugurated as under the old régime and soon parts of the code had to be modified or annulled by royal decrees. Finally the dissatisfaction with the new administrative system because of defects became so great that in 1802 an attempt was made to draw up a new Ordinance of Intendants for all Spanish America. The undertaking was futile for the document which was created proved to be unsatisfactory and was never put into effect; therefore the old code with all its imperfections and lack of self-government continued to be used until the eve of independence.

The judicial system had lost its early vigor and it too needed reform. Even the celebrated *La Acordada* had decayed and was sometimes an object of tyranny; all efforts to restore it to its former efficiency failed. Local judges seldom had any legal training or experience in judicial procedure; as a result they showed favoritism and delay was common. There was not a sufficient number of audiencias for the vast territories of New Spain and, although there were many petitions asking for more supreme tribunals, they were never erected. Business became congested in the audiencias for the lack of more judges and there were long delays in the trial of cases. When individuals who were desirous of the public welfare tried to better judicial and other conditions in Mexico their petitions and expedientes were usually tabled and nothing came of them.

The nineteenth century saw little improvement in the calibre of the viceroys. The people did not want to receive Marquina, since they thought he was a friend of the despicable Godoy and he had come without his papers. Iturrigaray was ambitious and dishonest and had to be deposed because it was thought that he was plotting for independence. Garibay and the archbishop viceroy, Lizana, were old and weak and did not know how to govern. Under such executives there was a decided weakening of control over the northern frontiers where foreigners plotted to dismember the Spanish colonial empire and to obtain territory. It

almost looked as if Texas would be lost at that time. Internal conspiracies multiplied under the decadent political administration and discontent increased. As the year 1810 approached the restlessness and undercurrent of dissatisfaction became more evident. The war executives, Venegas and Calleja, both military men were unable to pacify the hatred between creoles and gachupines, although they had some success against the revolutionists. They were both men of the old régime and Calleja did all he could to get the Spanish Constitution of 1812 suspended in Mexico. Mistaken policies and political intrigues in Spain added to the difficulties of administration in New Spain; there seemed to be a relationship of the American revolutionists with the liberals of the peninsula. O'Donojú, the last of the viceroys, realized the impossibility of putting into effect his elaborate instructions and that the Mexicans would have nothing but independence, therefore he made an agreement with General Iturbide for New Spain to have a constitutional monarchy headed by a member of the Spanish royal family; thus he helped to pave the way for the separation of the colony from the mother country.

Foreign influences, which penetrated into Mexico in spite of the vigilance of the Inquisition and higher officials, were very important as a cause of the revolution. For a number of years the colony had been subject to French influence and many Frenchmen were residents in it. French sympathizers tried to spread the doctrines of the French Revolution in New Spain and they succeeded, notwithstanding the efforts of viceroys to prevent it. The ideas of the French Revolution knew no bounds and its leaders thought that Mexico was a fertile field for their activities; the French also wanted to obtain additional territories and win commercial advantages. With the rise of Napoleon French designs in America became bolder and emissaries were sent to Mexico to influence the people to recognize him, and incidentally they scattered advanced ideas.

The liberalism of England likewise influenced the Spanish dependencies and its commerce had been welcomed for

many years, although it was illicit. The revolutionists tried to obtain the aid of Great Britain because that nation sympathized with their aims for independence in order to give a blow to the Spanish commercial restrictions. The influence of the republic of the United States was felt at once and young creoles were filled with the desire to imitate it. It is indubitable that the United States citizens deliberately tried to spread their liberal ideas in the southern viceroyalty and secretly aided the roseate scheme for independence.

The crucial events in Spain had a tremendous effect upon the colonies. The spirit of revolt was intensified by the prospects of French domination in Spain and by the knowledge that Napoleon was sending agents to America to secure the adhesion of the colonists to his plans. The inhabitants believed that they were not subject to the government of Spain but to the king's personal authority, therefore at first they declared that they would remain faithful to the deposed monarch and would not recognize the government of the usurper or the Spanish juntas. The Spanish juntas became the models for similar organizations in America and for the first time the colonists were interested in politics and took part in governmental affairs. Owing to lack of experience in politics and the hatred between creoles and gachupines, the members of the juntas could not agree, parties were formed, and viceroy Iturrigaray was deposed by the European party because it feared that he was plotting for independence. The Europeans then formed their own government and appointed Garibay viceroy without consulting Spain—an event which had no parallel in colonial history. Later the Spanish government assumed control in Mexico and appointed the archbishop, Lizana, chief executive. The Cortes granted certain important reforms in order to keep the people of New Spain satisfied and to counteract the promises of the revolutionists who, in the meantime, had obtained a considerable following. The Americans were permitted to send representatives to the Cortes and the Spanish Constitution of 1812 was applied

to Mexico, consequently conditions did look much brighter.

The reversion to absolutism when Ferdinand VII was restored to the throne caused much of the good work of the Cortes to be undone. The faithless monarch soon abolished the constitution that he had solemnly sworn to maintain and the creoles of New Spain lost hope when Viceroy Calleja tried to restore the administration to its old illiberal state. The difference between the viewpoint of the colonists and that of the mother country became more apparent than ever and soon the desire for independence was augmented. After having experienced certain elements of liberalism under a constitution, the colonists were not disposed to submit to the conditions of the old régime. The cruel reactionary policy of the hypocritical Ferdinand therefore crystallized the wish for separation from the mother country and made the bold creoles determined to obtain it at any cost.

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- Estado del comercio de este puerto en los seis meses primeros del presente año que se forma con arreglo á la Rl. orden de 8 de Octubre de 1788. Campeche, Sept. 6, 1794. AGI, 2506 (96-2-12). Audiencia de Méjico.
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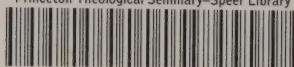
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